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A

MARTYROLOGY

OF

THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST,

COMMONLY CALLED

BAPTISTS,

DURING THE ERA OF THE REFORMATION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH OF T. J. VAN BRAGHT.

EDITED FOR

The Hanserd Knollys Society,

BY

EDWARD BEAN UNDERHILL.

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

As in the former volume, the members of the HANSERD KNOLLYS SOCIETY are indebted to the late Rev. Benjamin Millard of Wigan for the translation of the present volume, as far as the 384th page. For the rest the editor is responsible. To the present volume is appended an index of the two volumes, as it seems doubtful whether the work can be completed in the present series of the Society's publications. Some omissions of unimportant narratives, and a few letters of the martyrs, have been made; but in every case the editor has indicated in the notes the extent to which these have gone.

Dartmouth Villas, Lewisham Road.

Nov. 17, 1853.

313615

A MARTYROLOGY,

ETC.

HENRY DIRKSON, DIRK JANSON, ADRIAEN CORNELISON.—A.D. 1552.

[133.]

In this year were three brethren apprehended at Leyden, named Henry Dirkson, Dirk Janson, and Adriaen Cornelison, and examined concerning their faith. But as they boldly confessed and would not apostatize, they were condemned to death. Henry Dirkson, coming forward with joy, said, "Blessed are they that weep here, for they shall laugh, and receive for their reward garments of white, and an everlasting crown, if with steadfastness they fight. This is the sabbath of the Lord which I have long desired: not that I am worthy to suffer for his name, but he hath counted me worthy. We suffer not for theft or murder, but for the pure word of God."

Matt. xiii. 7.
Acts xii. 3.
Matt. x. 32.
Luke vi. 21.
Matt. xiii. 42.
2 Tim. iv. 8.
Matt. xxiv. 15.
Isa. lviii. 13.
Acts v. 42.
1 Peter iv. 15.

Dirk Janson said, "Although all men despise us, we are not therefore despised of God. Remember, my lords, there is above, a Judge over all. Be assured that he also will judge and condemn. This suffering is not so great," said he; "Christ had to suffer much more when he poured out his blood for us. He will strengthen us since we suffer for his name; for we suffer for no faction or wrong that

Psalm. vii. 11.
Matt. xxv. 31.
Isaiah liii.
Matt xxvi. 27.
Acts v. 41.

we have done. The only true faith is that which we maintain. Therefore, O God, have pity on me, and receive me into thine arms."

Luke xxiv. 25. Acts xiv. 22. Acts xx. 36. Adriaen Cornelison bravely said, "Christ and his beloved apostles have gone this way before us. We, his servants, must not be above our Lord." They then fell upon their knees and prayed earnestly to God; rising up, they said, "In putting us to death, they think to root out them that fear God; but for every one they slay, Matt. x. 28. a hundred shall arise. Therefore, fear not them which kill the body; but fear him who can cast both body and soul into everlasting torment." As they stood upon the bench, they exclaimed, "Fear not that which is temporal, Luke xxiii. 45 but that which shall endure for ever; for eternity is long." Rom. xii. 1. And committing their souls into the hand of God, they Rev. vi. 9. presented their sacrifice unto him. Now their souls rest beneath the altar, and wait the moment when they shall put on their glittering robes, and shall have presented to Matt xxvi. 29. them new wine before the throne of God.

The Belief or Confession of Adriaen Cornelison, made before the magistrates and priests. Together with an account of the manner of his apprehension.

James i 1. 2 Cor. i. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Brethren and sisters, beloved from my utmost heart. —I must write a little to you, expecting herewith to take my leave of you, and that you may know how it has gone with me in prison. It happened that I came to Leyden, and there speaking with a brother, we wondered how it was that they kept our friends so long; so we agreed that I should go and speak with the sheriff's officer, whose name is Jan Van Delft. On asking him how it went with the prisoners—if they would not shortly be executed? he said, "I hear nothing at all about it." I then

said, "Their long imprisonment must give you much trouble?"

Jan. "I bear the length of time pretty patiently, as it will soon be over."

Adriaen. "You can hardly go on so any longer."

Jan. "That is true."

Adriaen. "A little rest would be serviceable to you."

Jan. "It is, indeed, almost time."

Adriaen. "Jan, I wish to speak with you a little about some affairs."

Jan. "I have something more to do yet; but I will speak with you; wait here for me a little while."

I waited some time, and he came before he had disposed of the prisoners, or given them their meal; he spoke Psa. lv. 21. in a friendly manner, and received my words so kindly that I thought no otherwise than that he likewise would embrace our faith. I then said, "Jan Janson, what think you? If you will give up this office, and let the prisoners go, I will provide for your welfare. This is in your power, for you have the keys." Before I said this to him, he had said to our imprisoned friends, "Shall I leave the door open, that you may run out?" "Why should you do that?" said our friends. I therefore spoke to him the more freely on the business; for I thought on the words of Acts xvi. 28. Paul, and of the gaoler, and whether the Lord might not have bestowed a measure of his grace on this man, through the admonitions of our friends. I therefore spoke much with him. He asked me if I knew some whom he named. I said, "No; but I have heard of them." He next named one whom I knew well. I then said, "Yes; him I know well." Upon this he asked me from whence I was? I said, "I was born at Schoonhoven;" but I did not say that I was living at Delft. However, clever as I [138] might be, the devil was still more crafty, as we well know. Gen. iii. 1. After walking a long time together, we came again to the

prison He then said, "Will you speak to the prisoners?" Entering without fear, I came to our dear sisters. We conversed together as if we were unacquainted with each other. The officer then went a little aside and spoke to another officer. I then saw into what danger I had run. Some one may now ask or say, "Why did you go in?" Oh, dear friend, flesh and blood did not impel me to go in. Escape or flight was impossible. It is just as the prophet says: we may flee indeed, but not escape; therefore we must all come where we must be. I did not think I should have a fortunate journey to Leyden. The other officer then asked me if I would go above, to the others? I thought, "It is as bad as it can be," and went up. They shut the door upon me immediately, and one of them went for the sheriff. Having staid a little while conversing with our friends, I came down again. They opened the door for me, and there stood the night-guard. He said, "You must stay here a little;" on which I asked if I might go above? He said, "Yes." I observed, Christ had twelve apostles, and one was a Judas: but here were only two, and one of them was a Judas. Well, come, the Lord be praised for his mercy; and without further delay they fastened me in above, alone. I immediately began to sing the hymn: "O Truth, how art thou now despised!" But I had no long respite, for a great many people entered. My Testament was immediately taken from me, and from our four friends the hymn that I had composed. They then shut me up below with E. S. Not long after came the sheriff with the whole council. The gates were shut, and it was reported that there were a dozen in Leyden. They were very active, thinking that they had a great man or captain; alas, not they! The sheriff then asked, "Where is your sword?" I answered, "My Master has taught me not to carry a sword."

Micah vi. 14.

Ps. cxxxix. 7.

Matt. x. 1.

Isa. lix. 15.

Sheriff. "Who is your master?"

Adriaen. "Christ is my master." Matt. xxiii. 8.

Sheriff. "Christ is the master of us all."

Adriaen. "Were Christ your master, you would not continue to fight against him; but it will be hard for you to kick against the pricks." Acts ix. 5.

Sheriff. "That is our concern."

They then asked me where I had slept?

Adriaen. "I have slept well; have you slept badly?"

Sheriff. "No; but I will make you tell."

Whereupon one of the gentlemen asked if I had been re-baptized? I said, "No; I have been but once rightly baptized."

Sheriff. "Who baptized you?"

I asked him if he, too, would be baptized? Matt. xxviii. 19.

Sheriff. "Be not ashamed to tell it. I will readily say where, and by whom, I was baptized;—here, in St. Peter's Church."

Adriaen. "If you will indeed be baptized, I will freely tell you."

Sheriff. "I have no mind to it."

Adriaen. "Neither are you fit for it."

Sheriff. "Where is the servant, with the hat, that accompanied you?"

Adriaen. "I know nothing of a servant with a hat."

Sheriff. "We saw him going with you."

Adriaen. "Mr. Sheriff, you speak falsely; and if you are Christ's servant, you ought not to lie." Eph. iv. 25.

Our friends' hymn was then given me; and they inquired who had written that. I said, "I wrote it." They asked if I had also composed it. I said, "I wrote it;" but I did not inform them who composed it. The under-sheriff then said, "You were, one Friday, at my house, and you repeated to me a song to Mary Magdalen."

Adriaen. "You speak falsely, for my Master has not taught me any such song."

Under-sheriff. "It was an exhortation."

Adriaen. "It is not so."

The officers and others then said. "The knave is drunk." Yes, dear friends; then was brought to my mind the words
Acts ii. 13. of Peter (Acts ii). Now they were as drunk, as I also was; for I had tasted neither beer nor bread the whole day. They were now about to go away, but knew not what to do with me—where they should put me; for Jan van Delft, the officer, said, "E. S. is going on hopefully; but this rascal will corrupt him again." Nevertheless, they led me thither. All this happened on the same Monday that I was apprehended.

The next Thursday the sheriff came with two justices, and a commissary from the Hague. They asked me many things, which I was not willing to tell; also where I had slept, which I was desirous not to say; and many other things beside, too many to relate. They also inquired, "Do you know Jelis van Aken?"[a] I said, "I was never in my life at Aix-la-Chapelle." But as they kept asking me a long time, I said, "I know him." They then inquired where I had been in company with him? I said, "I shall not inform you; let it rest." They said, "You shall be made to tell us." On which I said, "Gentlemen, I have always avoided knowing much: that, in case I should be apprehended, I should not be able to say much." They then laid before me the letters I had sent them, and the hymn; they saw plainly that it was one writing; however, I did not confess. I thought, it will be soon enough; for I must say something if they torture me, for the business concerns myself. I did not therefore conceal that,
139.] when I was put on the rack; but I had no right to bring others into trouble. For this reason, when I have spoken to any one, I desired not to know where the friends

[a] Giles of Aix-la Chapelle. [See vol. i. p. 306.]

lived. And observe, dear friends, it is a great fault in many, as to this matter, who are always inquiring about one and another, and when they are not told take it amiss. Oh, dear friends, if you knew what you would have to suffer, should you be apprehended, you would not make such inquiries. If, therefore, you ask any questions at all, let it be concerning that faith by which your souls may be blessed. My dear friends, take this in good part; for I have written it in love. All the pain I have suffered has been on account of what they wished to know of others. The less, therefore, you know, the less will you have to say. The commissary looked at my Testament, and said, "This is a prohibited Testament." I said, "There you have spoken again falsely;" on which he was silent. The evening now came on; then went they away, promising me a good morning. On Saturday morning they all came before eight o'clock, and took me into the torture-chamber, where was the executioner. They then asked me if I had not thought better of it, and would now speak. I began to admonish them. They said, "We are not come here to be instructed by you; but we ask you, if you will reply;" but I was not disposed so to do. The executioner then stripped me, and bound my hands behind my back. Having fastened a block to my legs, they drew me up by the windlass that was there, and let me hang. While I was thus suspended, they asked me some questions; but I said nothing. Letting me down again, the sheriff inquired where I had worked, since I had come from Flanders? I said, "At Delft." Asking me more questions, and I not being disposed to answer, they again drew me up. The block was then taken off; and the executioner placed a piece of wood or iron between my legs, on which he stood binding my legs together. When he had let me down, the sheriff asked me, if I had not been at Leyden at a certain time which he named, with six of

my friends. That I did not confess. The executioner then drew me up again. Having bound my eyes, he took rods and scourged me. Letting me down, the sheriff said: "Tell me that, or I will tell you." I wished to criminate no one. They then hauled me up again, pulled me by my beard and hair, and struck and scourged me on my back; but my eyes being bound I saw not who it was that did it. They might indeed have asked, *Who is he that smote thee?* It lasted till I had been beaten with seven or eight rods. They then let me down again; and as I did not answer for a long time, they poured water upon me, fearing I should fall into a swoon; this they had also done while I was hanging. Sitting down, and not speaking for a long time, the sheriff said, "So you will not tell us? I will then tell you; you slept at Steven Claeson's."

Luke xxii. 64.

Matt. xxvi. 68.

Adriaen. "That is true."

"You came here, too, before the prison, with six of your friends, and exhorted the prisoners that they should piously strive for and abide in their faith; you then went away and hired a boat for six stivers. What man was that to whom the boat belonged? and who was that man in the other boat, who gave the captain a half-penny for putting his box on board, that he might sail with you?" And he knew all about the man's name; what we had done he likewise knew; and that there was a woman with us, and that we had read; and that two had sat with bare heads, and where we had landed. I then said, that it was so, and they wrote it down. I excused the two that were in the boat, but to no purpose; it remained noted as before. They then showed me the letters to the number of four or five. "Yes," I said, "I wrote them." They said, "This is the writer of the placards." Said the justices, "it is not becoming of you to speak of the emperor so slightingly." To which I replied, "I do not speak slightingly of the emperor. However great the

Acts xiv. 22.

emperor may be, the Supreme Emperor is still greater. Bring me a bible, and I will prove to you what I have written." They said, "Why did you write these letters?" I replied, "Because I was grieved; and that you should not again stain your hands with blood; and that you might at length repent, as they of Nineveh did." That was noted down. They then asked me, What I held concerning the sacrament of the altar? I said, "I thought nothing of it." Jonah iii. 5.

Qu. "How long is it since you were last there?"

Ans. "Four years."

Qu. "Have you been so long as that of this opinion?"

Ans. "No."

Qu. "Why then did you not go?"

Ans. "Ignorant as I was, I knew well that it was worthless."

They then hastened away. They were occupied with me from eight o'clock in the morning till half-past eleven. Such was the discussion I had. Dear friends, be not discouraged at that in it which is strongly expressed. The Lord verily helps his own people. Had not the Lord helped me, it would have been impossible for me to have borne it; but we *can do all things through him that strengtheneth us,* which is Christ. And *as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* 1 Cor. x. 13 Psa. xlvi. 1. Phil. iv. 13. 2 Cor. i. 5.

I will now conclude. *I bear in my body,* as Paul says, *the marks of the Lord Jesus.* Gal. vi. 17.

On Sunday morning they came and read to me my examination; and asked if it was correct. I then thought of what the prophet said: "They are evening wolves, that leave nothing till the morrow; yea, whose feet are swift to shed innocent blood." I then asked the sheriff if he was not nearly satisfied with innocent blood, that he was so diligent in the way of unrighteousness. To which he Zeph. iii. 3. Prov. i. 16.

replied, "*I* do not put you to death." I said, "The emperor's proclamation slays us: but then you should be satisfied with those you have, and not seek for more. By what will you prove that you may kill us? It stands written: *If thou seest thy brother sin, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; if he still will not hear, tell it unto the church; if he will not hear them, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican:* the scripture says nothing of killing."

Matt. xviii. 15.

Rom. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 14.

Sheriff. "We have other scriptures, as where Paul says, Rulers are not appointed in vain; for God has himself ordained them."

Adriaen. "Yes; for the protection of the good, and the punishment of the wicked; but methinks it is a strange perversion that they should be for the punishment of the good, and the protection of the wicked."

Sheriff. "We will show you, by books, that we may put you to death."

Adriaen. "You cannot prove it by the gospel."

Under-sheriff. "What do you know of the gospel?"

Mark i. 15.

Adriaen. "It is written, *Repent and believe the gospel.*"

Under-sheriff. "There have been eight gospels written."

Adriaen. "I am well satisfied with the four; if these cannot teach me, the other four cannot." [b]

Sheriff. "Adriaen Cornelison, shall we send learned men to you, that you may be instructed from the word of God?"

[b] [The four spurious gospels referred to were, 'The Gospel of the Infancy of Christ,' which Luther informs us was printed, circulated, and much read among the papist 'fools.' The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, the Protevangelion of James, and the Gospel of Nicodemus. From the Gospel of the Infancy, the Romanists have learnt the names of the parents of the blessed virgin, Joachim and Anna. The Gospel of Nicodemus was held in such regard in England, that in 1524 Erasmus informs us he saw it affixed to one of the columns of the cathedral of Canterbury. Kitto's Cyclop. i. 789; Luther's Werke, xi. 386.]

Adriaen. "I will willingly be instructed by the word of the Lord."

Sheriff. "That is well said."

Adriaen. "I will not speak with them, unless it be in the presence of the magistrates, and in company with my fellow prisoners."

This did not please them. They then went away, and the sheriff set off immediately for Delft.

Three weeks afterwards, the sheriff came into the prison where we three were together. He asked if we did not begin to be weary. We answered, "No." I then said, "James says, *Take an example of suffering affliction.*" James v. 10. They were surprised that we thought so little of it.

I then said to the sheriff, "*As the sufferings of Christ* 2 Cor. i. 5. *abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*"

Sheriff. "I should think that it must be tedious to you."

Adriaen. "Does it not begin to tire you to shed this blood?"

He made no reply. He then asked, if some learned Prov. i. 16. men should be sent us. We said, "We are quite willing 2 Tim. ii. 15. at all times to be taught by the word of the Lord."

Sheriff. "They will not otherwise instruct you than from the word of the Lord."

Adriaen. "We will at any time exchange our faith for a better, that it may not be said that we are stiff-necked; and so ought our opponents likewise to do."

Sheriff. "That is right; be instructed; perchance, your Deut. x. 16. remaining here may not be long."

Adriaen. "You know not whether we shall remain here long. And though we are now forsaken, the Lord will Matt. xv. 13. John xiv. 18. speedily be gracious unto us. So let it be." He then said, "Some one shall be sent to you." We called to him, as he went down the steps, to bring a bible or a testament with him.

Psa. lv. 21. In the afternoon, there came a priest with two officers. He assumed so specious an appearance; he spread out his wares, and thought to sell some; and spoke so kindly. And when either of us spoke, he had much to bring forward. I then said that the Lord had warned us Matt. xvi. 6. against the leaven of the Pharisees, and them that go in long clothing.

Priest. "The clothing is of no consequence."

I then said, that their infant baptism, the chiming of bells, the mass, and all their trifling ceremonies, were not right. To this he said, that the holy baptism of children was right. I asked where it was written that it is right?

Priest. "In the Corinthians, the first epistle, in the 16th chapter."

Adriaen. "It is there said that the household of Stephanus was the first in Achaia that had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints; these, forsooth, could not be children; children cannot give themselves to the service of the saints; they must be served themselves."

Acts xvi. 33. Concerning the gaoler with his household, he asked us, if there were no children there.

Ans. "No."

Priest. "How do you know that?"

Adriaen. "It stands written, that the gaoler rejoiced that he had believed in Christ Jesus, with his whole house. Children cannot rejoice that they believe; for they have no faith." Herein he was likewise silenced; in the same manner, he brought forward the case of Lydia, the purple seller.

Priest. "When I was young, I had faith as perfectly as I now have."

Adriaen. "What did you say at that time?"

To this he made no reply. He then said: "When

I was born, I had hands, but I knew it not; so likewise, my faith was hidden in me; and the original sin I had was taken away by the new birth of water which took place at the font."

I then asked him, if the water was crucified for him, or Christ.

Priest. "Christ."

Adriaen. "And yet you seek salvation in the water."

Here he was silent.

Dirk Janson then asked him where it was written that bells ought to be baptized?

Priest. "That was instituted by the holy church."[c]

And he further asked him concerning the celebration of mass.

He said that "God was bodily present, in the mass, both flesh and blood."

I said that he was a seducer. John x. 8.

Priest. "Has not God said, 'Take, eat, this is my Matt. xxvi. 26—28.

[c] [Bells first came into use in the 7th century. The earliest appearance of their consecration is in some rituals of the age of Charlemagne, and in one of his capitulars the practice is censured and prohibited. The pope, John XIV., about the year 937, was the first to give names to bells, giving his own name at its consecration to the great bell of the Lateran. Baronius attributes this to Pope John XIII. in 968. The practice of consecration and baptism of bells was afterwards established by the Pontificale, in the old editions of which the form may be found entitled, De benedictione Signi vel Campanæ. The duties of a bell are thus described on a MS. leaf in a Sarum Manual. *Duaci*, 1610.

En ego Campana nunquam denuncio vana :
Laudo Deum verum, Plebem voco, congrego Clerum :
Funera plango, fulgura frango, Sabbatha pango :
Excito lentos, dissipo ventos, paco cruentos.

Calfhill's answer to Martiall, p. 15, note 5. Bingham, Christian Antiq. ii. 192. Magdeburg, Cent. Cent. x. col. 214. If a consecrated bell happened to get broken, it was interred in the church like a human body. Cenalis, the bishop of Avranche, in a book against the Calvinists, seriously urges that bells were a sign of the true church. Dyer's Life of Calvin, p. 76.]

flesh; and drink, this is my blood; and, as often as ye eat this bread, ye do show the Lord's death?"

And we had much conversation on this point. I then asked him if he had read attentively 1 Tim. iv.

[141] *Priest.* "Why, yes."

I then asked him if he had brought a Testament with him.

Priest. "Yes; here is a Testament in Latin."

Adriaen. "We have not been scholars in a Latin high
John xvi. 13. school, but in that renowned school of the gospel in which the Spirit of God is teacher."

He said he could read it just as well in German. He tnen read the place concerning the forbidding to marry,
1 Tim. iv. 3. and the abstaining from meats. I asked him, of whom these things were spoken? He said he did not know.

Adriaen. "If you are a teacher, you ought to know that."

Priest. "Yes; it speaks of the end of the world."

Adriaen. "It speaks of the last times; will you then say, that this is not the last time?"

1 John ii. 18. He was silent; and then said that he had not forbidden marriage, nor meats. We replied: "Your father has done
Esther iii. 8. it, namely, the pope; and you, like Haman, have obtained mandates to put us and ours to death; and you helped to give the emperor ten thousand pounds of silver."

Priest. "I did not do it."

Adriaen. "Are you Christians? It does not become Christians to persecute."

Priest. "We do not persecute you."

I then asked him whether the Christian church persecuted, or suffered persecution?

2 Tim. iii. 12. *Priest.* "She suffers persecution."

Upon which I asked him in what way he suffered persecution; or, if we were not they who endure persecution.

Priest. "We suffer persecution from the devil."

We then asked him, where it was written that men might put us to death on account of our faith. He said that it was enjoined on account of so many wicked sects. We said, "We belong to no sects."

Priest. "It is suspected, that it may be so with you."

Dirk Janson said, "Do they hang a man, merely because he is suspected of having stolen, although he may not be guilty of it? Neither may men put us to death, before we are found worthy thereof."

The priest at length went away; we had brought many things before him which he did not understand. I said that he was one who robbed God of his honour by the confessional, in which it was sought to forgive sins. In this he was likewise defeated, and then he took his departure. I hope that we shall shortly offer up our sacrifice together. Luke v. 21.

O my dear friends, watch over each other, and walk circumspectly; for the people are much enraged, diligently seeking for our brother, where he is. Therefore walk somewhat more wisely in this respect, than some of you do; for, dear friends, they would treat him roughly, if they had him, did the Lord permit it: wherefore, be advised for the best; for there are but few labourers in the harvest. Be careful therefore of them that are now in the harvest, to provide for them. And further, dear friends, when you meet together, to speak of the word of the Lord, do not spend your time in unprofitable talk, and old wives' fables, but exercise yourselves unto godliness; that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand; and be ever diligent to build up the spiritual temple with honour at the coming of the Lord. He that is holy, let him be more holy; he that is pure, let him be more pure; as Paul writes to the Thessalonians, it was not needful to write to them, that only they should abound still more Thus let it be with you, my

1 Tim. iv. 13. Matt. ix. 37. 1 Tim. iv. 7. Eph. vi. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. xxii. 11. 1 Thess. iii. 12.

dear brethren. Read the admonition I have written to you, which you will duly receive. Salute, for me, all the friends in the Lord, in particular G., our brother, a faithful minister. All that are in bonds greet him, and to all lovers of the truth they likewise send salutation. We commend you to the Lord. We are all in good spirits: the Lord be praised for ever.

My dear friends, I must write a little more to you. The paper I used before fell short, for, dear friends, when we are in prison, paper is scarce; but as Habakkuk brought me more, I will therefore write you a little concerning some matters that befell us in the prison, and which before were forgotten. It happened then, that the officer that betrayed me, came to us with our dinner. I then asked him if I had in any respect injured him, and that he would forgive me; and I spoke to him as much and as
Matt. v. 44. kindly as I could, which indeed is commanded us. He then said, "You have not, either of you, injured me." By our kind language and the manifestation of our affection for him, he was made ashamed that he had betrayed
Rom. xii. 20. me, and that I should address him so affectionately.

Further: some reasonings of the priest who came to instruct us. I asked him if he had faith. He said, "Yes."

Adriaen. "Should you lie here a month in prison with us, I think you would deny your faith?"

Priest. "Perhaps not."

He then began to speak of faith; and said that faith was incomprehensible. I said, "If faith be incomprehensible, how then can we be saved?" Here he was at a loss. We afterwards touched upon the appointing of ministers;
1 Tim. iii. 2. and upon Paul's saying that teachers must be blameless, and proceeding, in a following sentence, that they must be given to hospitality: when, I said, "You would rather be a guest yourself, than render hospitality to others, and

entertain strangers. And," said I, "if I came to your house, would you be willing to receive me?"

Priest. "Perhaps, yes." [142]

We had further conversation about infant baptism; he defended it from the households. I then asked him, to whom the Scriptures were addressed? did they not speak to those that had ears to hear, and hearts to understand?

Priest. "Yes."

I then asked him if any scripture pertained to children?

Priest. "No."

Adriaen. "If no scripture be addressed to infants, then baptism does not appertain to them." Here he was caught, and had no more to say about his infant baptism. He further spoke of eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood; that Christ gave his apostles flesh of his flesh, John vi. 52. and blood externally to drink. I said that he was worse than the Jews.

Priest. "Why?"

Adriaen. "The Jews murmured at it, and said, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* You now come, and will at once eat it up. Be assured, Christ did not utter this expression in the sense in which you wrest it," said I to the priest. In fine, he would willingly have made an honourable retreat; for his wares would not take.[d]

[d] [Cornelison was by trade a glass-blower. He cheered the time of his imprisonment by writing to his fellow believers several letters, which are preserved by Van Braght. One of them was written with his legs confined in the stocks. Besides the two brethren named, two females were imprisoned with him.]

SIX PIOUS BRETHREN, NAMELY:— LIEVIJN JANSON, MEYNERT HERMANSON, PIETER THYMANSON, REYER EGBERTSON, HENDRIK ANTHONISSON, CLAES GERBRANTSON.

ALL, FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, EXECUTED BY FIRE, OR BURNT ALIVE, AT AMSTERDAM, ON THE 6TH AUGUST, ANNO 1552.

The lily, or rose of the church of God, grows among thorns.

"The blood of the martyrs" (said one of the ancients) "is the seed of the church; the rose grows in the midst of thorns; thus, likewise, the blooming rose of the church of Christ."

The truth of this appeared in those hard and sorrowful times, in which nothing was heard of but strangling, burning, murder, and blood-shedding of the innocent and defenceless sheep of Christ. Yet, even at that time, the number of persons who were animated to follow them, and to receive their faith, was greater than the multitude of those who had been put to death.

At this time, men repaired in whole troops, so to speak, to the spiritual conflict.

At this time men marched in whole troops, so to speak, to the spiritual conflict; yea, to those places where nothing but certain death awaited them. Each one was ready, if God counted him worthy, to become a sacrifice for God. Neither fire nor sword was dreaded for the testimony of the Lord, while looking at His consolatory and most glorious promises, which he has given to those who remain steadfast.

This appeared, anno 1552, in the case of six pious brethren, who are named above.

This was the case in the year of Christ, 1552, in the month of August, when six pious Christians, having come out of Babel, sought the vision of peace, the spiritual Jerusalem of the true church of God, notwithstanding the many assaults and storms that fell upon them, insomuch that it even cost them their lives, by the cruel and horrible death of the flames.

The circumstances of the case were as follows:—Three of these persons had already been received, by baptism, as members of the church; and the other three were awaiting admission. In the mean time they were apprehended, and brought to Amsterdam, where they all made a good confession of the most holy faith which they had heartily embraced, although the last three were grieved on account of one thing, namely:—That they had not yet been baptized, which ordinance, had it been possible, they would before their death have observed.

How and in what manner they were affected before their death.

In few words the sentence of death was pronounced upon them all, "that they," as heretics, "should be executed by fire," that is, in ordinary language, "be burnt alive;" which cruel death they all steadfastly endured, as appears from the following sentence, which we have received, extracted from the "Record of Criminal Sentences of the city of Amsterdam," as read at the tribunal just before their death; and which for the undoubted certainty of the event related above we therefore here annex:—

The sentence of death pronounced upon the said persons.

Sentence of death of the aforesaid six persons:—Lieven Janson, Meynert Hermanson, Pieter Thymanson, Reyer Egbertson, Hendrik Anthonisson, Claes Gerbrantson.

Whereas, Lievijn Janson, of Ghent, otherwise called Liefken de Keyser, weaver by trade; Meynert Hermanson, of Balk, sawyer; Pieter Thymanson, of Zutphen, formerly a cooper, now a bookbinder by trade; Reyer Egbertson, freeman of this city; Hendrik Anthonisson, of Leyden, both weavers; and Claes Gerbrantson, born at Wormer, have resorted to the conventicles and assemblies of people of the Anabaptists' sect, to hear the instructions of the leaders or teachers of the said sect; that is to say, Claes Gerbrantson aforesaid, the instructions of Menno Symons for more than ten years past, and the aforesaid

The accusation against Lievijn Janson, Meynert Hermanson, Pieter Thymanson, Reyer Egbertson, Hendrik Anthonisson, Claes Gerbrantson, &c.

1. That they had been present at the assemblies and sermons of the (so called) Anabaptists.

Claes Gerbrantson, had heard Menno Simons for more than ten years. Lievijn of Ghent, and all the rest had heard Gillis van Aken.

2. That they had separated themselves from the communion of the Romish church.

3. That they were erroneous in their judgment of the sacraments of the Romish church.

4. That Lievijn Meynert and Pieter had been re-baptized; renouncing their baptism received in infancy.

Lievijn, of Ghent, and all the others, those of Gillis van Aken; and as, by adhering to the doctrines, errors, and heresies propagated by the said false teachers, they have separated themselves from the faith, obedience, and unity of the holy Christian church: being of erroneous judgment concerning the sacraments of the holy church; so that the foresaid Lievijn, Meynert, and Pieter, have suffered themselves to be re-baptized by the said Gillis van Aken, renouncing their baptism received in infancy; and the before-named Reyer Egbertson, Hendrik Anthonisson, and Claes Gerbrantson, renouncing likewise their baptism aforesaid, have acknowledged themselves ready to be re-baptized, if they could obtain the same, contrary to the holy Christian faith, the ordinances of holy church, the written laws and proclamations of his imperial majesty our gracious Lord; and, moreover, remaining obstinate in their unbelief, heresy, and errors:—Therefore, my lords the justices, having heard the demand of the sheriff made [143.] of the aforesaid,* with their confession, and having maturely considered the nature of the matters aforesaid, condemn the aforesaid† to be executed with fire by the executioner; declaring further, their goods to be confiscated to his imperial majesty as Count of Holland, our gracious Lord, without prejudice or injury to the privileges of this city. Done and pronounced by the tribunal, on the sixth day of August, anno 1552. Present, all the justices. Performed, Andries Boelen, by advice of the burgomasters.

* The sentence reads "Delinquents."

† The sentence reads "Delinquents."

When the torturing of Hendrik Anthonisson and Reyer Egbertson took place.

Of these, Hendrik Anthonisson the 28th of June; and Reyer Egbertson, the last of July, anno 1552, were examined by torture.

Extracted from the Criminal Records deposited in Amsterdam, with the town-clerk.—N.N.

PIETER OF OLMEN, OR OF WERWICK,[a] PUT TO DEATH AT GHENT, 1552.

[145]

A Letter of Pieter of Olmen, said to be of Werwick, written in prison at Ghent, where, for the testimony of Jesus, he resigned his life.—ANNO 1552.

The abundant grace and peace of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Grace and peace be with you from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who is *the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;* 2 Cor. i. 3. *who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God; for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. For our affliction, which is temporary* 2 Cor. iv. 17. *and light, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:* for us, who *look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. And we know that if our earthly house of* 2 Cor. v. 1. *this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* For this Rom. viii. 22. we earnestly long; for our house which is from heaven, Rev. iii. 18. desiring that therewith we should be clothed upon; *if so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For while* 2 Cor. v 4 *we are in this tabernacle, we groan, being burdened; for we* [146] *would rather be clothed upon, and not unclothed, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always comforted, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are* on pilgrimage, being *absent from the Lord.* For we walk by faith,

[a] [In West Flanders, on the borders of France.]

and see him not; but we are comforted, *and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.*

Heb. x. 25. I exhort you, dear brethren and sisters, by the mercy of God, that with diligence you assemble yourselves together to impart to each other, while yet you have time, a good knowledge of the everlasting truth of our Redeemer; for

Heb. xiii. 14. here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come, and that with patience. Therefore, dear brethren and sisters, let the word of the Lord sink into your hearts, and understand well what the Lord saith; that, in the time of trial you may stand fast in piety: for I tell you, dear brethren, that this conflict must devoutly be carried on. It is a severer one than I thought, for they come to us with such artful questions and kind words, to entangle us in our words, thus to cause us to fall away. Therefore, dear brethren, assist each other to discern which is the way

James i. 27. of the Lord, and which the way of the devil: which the true service of God, and which the service of the devil and idols; who are the children of the Lord, and who the chil-

John xvii. 16. dren of the devil. For the children of God are not of this world, therefore the world hateth them. They endure all kinds of persecution; they are led as sheep

Ps. xliv. 22. to the slaughter—are hated of all, and the prey of every one. They have no certain dwelling place; they are

Isa. lix. 15 the refuse of all men and all people; they weep and lament, while the world rejoice; they are reproached, be-

1 Cor. iv. 11. cause they trust in the living God. Hereby we know who

John xvi. 20. are the children of God, and who are the children of the

1 Tim. iv. 10. devil: *he that doeth righteousness, is righteous, even as He is*

1 John ii. 10. *righteous; he that committeth sin is of the devil.* Therefore,

1 John iii. 7. dear children, *love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for all that is in the world, namely, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world; and the world*

passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

My dearly beloved, know that I have fought a hard battle with the rulers of darkness, and the false prophets. They said, that we should hear and be instructed by them, though they do not live according to the commandments of God. I then put to them this question, "Is not he a stranger to God, who walks not in the commandments of the Lord?" They answered, "Yes." I then said, "Christ saith, *My sheep, hear my voice, and they follow me; but they hear not the voice of a stranger, but flee from him;* were I, then, to hear a stranger, I should not be of Christ's sheep, for the sheep of Christ hear not strangers." Eph. vi. 13. John x. 4.

Ans. "Nevertheless, they preach the truth; the word, therefore, is not of less value." I replied, "John teaches *He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* If then there is no truth in him, how can he speak the truth? Otherwise, John must lie. Christ saith; *A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit;* to others he saith, *How can ye, being evil, speak good things?* Solve that question, and I will believe you. I tell you; should such a man take a Testament, and read it entirely through in your churches, just as the apostles wrote it, yet I will prove to you that he lies; but let a man that walks in the ways of God utter the same words, and he will speak the truth. Should any one of your people preach these words in your temple, concerning drunkards, adulterers, thieves, murderers, covetous persons, backbiters, slanderers, &c., saying, 'Ye are that chosen generation, that royal priesthood; that holy nation; that peculiar people; to show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; ye are they who in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have ob- 1 John ii. 4. Matt. vii. 18. Matt. xii. 34. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

tained mercy:'—if he spoke these words concerning that wicked people, would he not lie? But if a God-fearing man should speak them concerning God-fearing people,
Rom. viii. 36. he would speak the truth. Again, if you preached, 'For thy sake we are led as sheep to the slaughter;' would not that be spoken falsely by you? But a God-fearing man would speak the truth."

Thus many words passed between us, but to no effect. I then asked him, if the children of God must not all be
Rom. viii. 5. spiritual? He said, "Yes, certainly." Whereupon I inquired, why then they were[f] called spiritual, and others worldly, since they must all be spiritual? That they
John xvii. 9 could not show. I then said, "Christ prays not for the world, but for them who are not of the world; if then you are spiritual, how comes it that you are not all of the same mind? For one must be clothed in nothing but grey; he must touch no money, and his shoes must have
[147] a hole in the top;[g] another must go all in black;[h] and a third be speckled.[i] Others must not eat what is cooked, nor speak to their father or mother when they see them; but when they do not see them, they then speak to them.[j] These I said are all diverse sects, and all planted

[f] ["That is, the priests. They especially claimed the character of 'spiritual,' or the 'spirituality,' from the exaggerated and exclusive notions entertained of the ministerial office. Thus Gregory Nanzianzen says:—'The minister's office places him in the same rank and order as angels—he performs the priest's office with Christ himself; he reforms the work of God's hands, and presents the image to his Maker; his workmanship is for the world above, and therefore he should be exalted to a divine and heavenly nature whose business is to be as God himself, and to make others gods also.'" Coleman's Antiquities, p. 75.]

[g] ["The Franciscans, or Minorites, were called 'grey friars,' from the colour of their habit." Hart's Eccl. Records, p. 76.]

[h] [The Benedictines were called *nigri monachi*. Hart, *ib.*]

[i] [The Dominicans were termed *fratres de picâ*, or *magpie* brethren, from the curious mixture of black and white in their monastic habit. Hart, *ib.*]

[j] [The monks of La Trappe. The only words allowed to pass their lips are *memento mori*.]

by men, and not by God; therefore they must all be rooted up." To this, they could say but little. I then said, "Your doctrine is the doctrine of devils; for all that you observe and do is contrary to the truth; as Paul says, *In the last times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created.* Now, I see that you teach this; for you forbid to marry, and to eat meats." I was then called to go away. Matt. xv. 13. 1 Tim. iv. 1.

In a short time afterwards, the dean of Ronse came, with another priest. They assailed me very sharply with crafty questions; but the Lord preserved me from being betrayed. He asked me if I did not believe that the bread which Christ gave to his apostles, was the body of Christ? since he said, *Take, eat; this is my body, that is broken for you.* I said, "That bread was not the body which was broken for us; it was in remembrance of it." He then said, "The bread was changed into His body." But I said that it was for a memorial of it, and was not the body itself. They afterwards asked me concerning baptism; whether children ought not to be baptized? I said, "There is no mention made of infant baptism; but of a baptism upon believing." They then said, "Look, we will prove that the children ought to be baptized, John iii.; does not Christ there say, *Except a man be born again, of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" I replied, "That is not addressed to children, but to those that can hear." But they said, "It is;" and upon this ground, they attempted to institute and support infant baptism. Thus we had much conversation; but were of one mind in nothing. Matt. xxvi. 26. Luke xxii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 5.

I therefore admonish you, dear brethren and sisters, to impart to each other a good knowledge of all things; namely, of the Lord's supper; of baptism; of the incarna- Luke i. 27.

tion of Christ; of spiritual children, and the children of
Mark x. 28. the world. Walk circumspectly in the fear of the Lord, and be afraid of none, however violently they may rage. I likewise admonish you, dear brethren and sisters, by the
Col. iv. 2. love of our Lord, that you will unite in prayers for me to the Lord, that I may stand fast in piety when I am tried. Further, I beg that you will diligently instruct my beloved mother in all necessary things; and also my brother and my wife, if peradventure she may repent. The Lord fill you with his Spirit. Amen.

Written with difficulty, on account of the people always present.

The abundant grace and peace of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, be with you. Amen.

Ecclus. xv. 1. He who feareth God will do well.

CORNELIS OF KULENBURG.—ANNO 1552.

In the year 1552, a young brother, Cornelis by name, was apprehended by direction of the Count of Kulenburg,
Rev. ii. 13. for the testimony of Jesus. He remained in confinement, at the said place, about three years, and was afterwards burned for the truth of Christ. During the time of his imprisonment he suffered many assaults from priests, monks, and prelates, who assembled at the castle of Kulen-
Jer. v. 26. burg. These ministers of the Roman Antichrist laid
2 Thess. i. 7. many snares for the youth, to entrap his soul. They inflicted great torments upon him, to make him give information of his companions, and then again employed fair worldly promises; following in this the example of
Matt. iv. 8. their master, Satan, when he tempted our Saviour Jesus.
Luke iv. 12. But the prisoner, if young in years, was yet old in faith, and valiantly, through the grace of God, withstood the
2 Macc vii. 30. temptation. But it cost this goodly youth his life, through

the said count, who was urged thereto by the clergy, and was at the same time anxious to continue the Pope's friend. John xix. 12. Being fastened to a stake, the priests came to him, tempting him to apostatize; but he chose much rather to die for the name of Jesus, than to forsake the truth. He was thus burned at the stake, a partaker of the sufferings of Christ, and shall be rewarded at the appearing of the great God, with everlasting joy. Titus ii. 13.

See a hymn in the Historical Hymn Book.

HERMAN JANSON OF SOLLEM,

EXECUTED BY FIRE, OR BURNED ALIVE, FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS, AT AMSTERDAM, ON THE 16TH FEBRUARY, 1553.

That the distress at this time was very great, and wherein it consisted.

At this time the distress was very great, and did not abate. For all who truly departed from the Babel of idolatrous Rome, and turned to the spiritual Jerusalem, the peaceful church of Jesus Christ, were declared to be worthy of death.

Concerning the pious witness of JesusChrist, named Herman Janson of Sollem, who was brought to Amsterdam, and there finally condemned.

This appeared in 1553, in the beginning of the year, at Amsterdam, in the case of a certain pious and devout candidate, who was in readiness to receive baptism on a confession of his faith. His name was Herman Janson. He was born at Sollem. In the warmth of his early zeal, he was apprehended, for the truth of God, by the rulers of darkness, and brought prisoner to Amsterdam. There he [148] had to suffer many hardships and vexations, the object of which was to draw him away from the faith; but remaining steadfast and immovable, he was condemned to lose his life, and, as a heretic, to be executed by fire. The sentence was publicly read to him in the court of justice, on the sixteenth day of the month of January, 1553, and on the same day executed; as may be seen from the

Touching his sentence of death, which was publicly read to him in the court of justice, extracted from the book of Criminal Sentences at Amsterdam.

following sentence, which, in proof whereof, we have extracted from the book of criminal records, of the city of Amsterdam. It is as follows:—

Sentence of death upon Herman Janson, of Sollem.

The accusation preferred against Herman Janson of Sollem:—
1. That he had united himself in fellowship (or in the assemblies) of the Anabaptists or Re-baptizers.
2. That he had listened to or received their doctrines and exhortations.
3. That, in particular, he had been in the assemblies conducted by Gillis van Aken, and also by others.
4. That, by these means, he had renounced his baptism received in infancy; and desired to be baptized again (or upon confession of his faith) if he had been able to obtain the same.
All his goods were confiscated.

Whereas Herman Janson, born at Sollem, has betaken himself to those of the Anabaptist sect, and has listened to their exhortations, doctrines, and errors; also has been present in certain conventicles (that is assemblies), where the Scripture was in an unbecoming manner taught and recited, both by Gillis van Aken, and others; in such wise, that he, renouncing the baptism he had received, has confessed that he was desirous of receiving another baptism, if he could have obtained the same; likewise judging erroneously of the holy sacrament of the altar, contrary to the ordinance and faith of the holy Christian church, the written laws and proclamations of his imperial majesty our gracious Lord; and further remains obstinate in this his unbelief, heresy, and error, regardless of the instructions given him by the orthodox.

Therefore my lords the judges [having] heard the plea of the sheriff against the said Herman Janson, with his confession, and having maturely considered the case, do condemn the said Herman Janson, conformably to the aforesaid proclamations, to be executed by fire. Further, we declare his goods to be confiscated to the use of his imperial majesty, as count of Holland. Pronounced and executed, the sixteenth day of January, 1553; present, the sheriff, Pieter Cantert and Joost Buijk, burgomasters, and all the justices, by advice of the other two burgomasters.

Extracted from the criminal records of the city of Amsterdam, deposited with the secretary.—N. N.

FELISTIS JANS, SURNAMED RESINX,

BURNED AT AMSTERDAM, FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, ON THE 16TH OF JANUARY, ANNO 1553.

Relating the death of Felistis Jans, surnamed Resinx.

On the same day, and at the same tribunal, and for the same cause, was condemned to the flames, a certain female, Felistis Jans by name, but surnamed Resinx, born at Vreden [in Westphalia], as may be seen from the recorded sentence, which we possess, extracted from the *original criminal records* of the city of Amsterdam, and also the particulars of the time when she was tortured, all which we could here insert, word for word; but to avoid tediousness, we shall briefly give the substance in distinct divisions, in order that it may be plainly seen, on what grounds she suffered death.

Of which an account is inserted in the record of criminal sentences of Amsterdam.

A brief extract from the sentence of death of Felistis Jans, or Felistis Resinx.

Introduction of her name and the place of birth.

After her name, and the place of her birth, the matters laid to her charge are described, consisting of the following particulars.

After which, the seven succeeding charges were stated, as the grounds of her death.

1. That she had betaken herself to the assemblies of the sect of Anabaptists.

2. That she had separated herself from the obedience and beliefs of the [so-called] holy [that is, Roman] church.

3. That she judged erroneously of the sacrament of the altar.

4. That she had entertained in her house, or shown hospitality to those whom she knew to be of the said sect [that is, the said Anabaptists].

5. That she had seduced certain persons from their obedience to the [Romish] church, to her own opinions.

6. That she continued obstinately attached to the aforesaid [so-called] errors, and was unwilling to give up the same.

7. That all such things were opposed to the ordinances of holy church, and the proclamations of his imperial majesty.

Then follows the conclusion, or decree, namely,—

That she should be executed by fire.

That she [for these causes] should be executed by fire, and that all her goods should be confiscated [or forfeited] to the use of the emperor, &c.

[149]

Done in the presence, &c., &c.

Afterwards follows a note of the time when she was tortured in these words,—

With reference to the time when she was tortured.

This Felistis was condemned to the torture [or rack], and was put to the torture upon the second day of January, one thousand five hundred and fifty-three.

Extracted from the criminal records, deposited with the secretary of the city of Amsterdam.—N. N.

The date of the time of this young woman's death was stated by former writers to be the year 1551; but it is found that this took place anno 1553, the 16th January. Her name was given simply Flistis; but it is found that it must have been Felistis Jans Resinx.

The year of the death of this Felistis, was not corectly given by the previous writers of the History of the Martyrs, nor was her name accurately expressed; but by means of the above quoted sentence, we have fully set the matter right.

Meanwhile, it is worthy of remark, in conjunction with the above statement, that the older writers testify that she was a moral and virtuous young woman, and became, through her long imprisonment, so familiar with the gaoler's wife, that she was employed as a servant to assist in household affairs.

It so happened that the gaoler's wife once had some dirt to carry out, but had no one at hand whom she could order to do it. "Shall I do it?" said Felistis. To which the gaoler's wife replied, "Would you run away?" Felistis answered in return, "No." But thinking more closely

on the matter, and pondering the frailty of human nature, she became unwilling to expose herself to such a trial, and therefore declined it. Truly, a prudent resolution for an apparently weak young woman.

A remark, in what manner she came upon the scaffold, and presented her offering.

Shortly afterwards, say the former writers, she was seen approaching the scaffold on which she was to be burned; her dress clean, and a white apron before her; as if she was desirous of showing, by her outward dress, how purely and uprightly a Christian maiden ought internally to be adorned, in order to please her beloved and heavenly bridegroom, Christ Jesus.

Thus did she present her offering. She is numbered among the throng of martyrs, holy and acceptable to God.[k]

SIMON, THE PEDLAR.—ANNO 1553.

About the year 1553, at Bergen op Zoom, in Brabant, there was a pedlar named Simon, standing in the market selling his wares. The priests with their idol[l] passing by, the said Simon dared not show the counterfeit god any divine honour; but following the testimony of God in the holy Scripture, he worshipped the Lord his God only, and Him alone served. He was therefore seized by the advocates of the Romish Antichrist, and examined as to his faith. This he boldly confessed. He rejected infant baptism as a mere human invention, with all the commandments of

2 Macc. vii. 39.

Daniel iii. 18.

Matt. iii. 10.

Matt. x. 19.

[k] Compare this with the Martyrs' Mirror of Defenceless Christians (edition 1631), page 125, col. 2, &c.

[l] [The host, which in Roman Catholic countries the priests carry through the streets to the house of some dying person, in order to administer the last rites of the church.]

[130] men, holding fast the testimony of the word of God; he
Rev. ii. 13. was therefore condemned to death by the enemies of the
Heb. xiii 12. truth. They led him outside the town, and for the tes-
Rev. ii. 13. timony of Jesus, committed him to the flames. The astonishment of the bystanders, was greatly excited when they saw the remarkable boldness and steadfastness of this
2 Tim. iv. 8. pious witness of God, who, through grace, thus obtained the crown of everlasting life.

The bailiff, who procured his condemnation, on his return home from the execution fell mortally sick, and was confined to his bed. In his suffering and sorrow he continually exclaimed, Oh! Simon, Simon! The priests and monks sought to absolve him; but he would not be
2 Macc. ix. comforted. He speedily expired in despair, an instructive
9, 28. and memorable example to all tyrants and persecutors.
Acts xii. 23.

WOUTER VAN CAPELLE.—ANNO 1553.

In the year 1553, a devout brother, named Wouter Capelle was seized at Dixmude,[m] in Flanders, for living agreeably to the word of God. There he sealed and
Rev. ii. 13. testified his belief of the truth by his bloody death,
Heb. xiii. 7. leaving an instructive example worthy of imitation by all true believers, when they look at his end, and follow their faith, especially the Author of our faith, even Christ Jesus, who is blessed for ever. This said witness for God
1 Pet. iv. 16. suffered for the truth, and for the testimony of God's word, and not for any crime. By the grace of God he
2 Tim. iv. 8. hath therefore won the crown of everlasting life, promised to all who, for the word of God, are put to death by men,
2 Macc. vii. 17. to be raised again in great glory at the last day.

[m] [About sixteen miles southwest of Bruges, on the river Ysere.]

TYS, A YOUNG MAN; AND BERENTGE, A YOUNG WOMAN.—ANNO 1553.

In the year 1553, there were drowned at Leeuwaarden, in Friesland, for the testimony of Jesus, a youth, called Tys, and a young woman by name Berentge, two zealous followers of Christ. For this cause they greatly desired to meet, that they might rejoice together in the word of God. But their desire was difficult of accomplishment, because Tys was very lame, and Berentge generally confined to her bed. But, at last, it pleased God that they should meet; for the persecutors having issued forth to apprehend the people of God, who, being made aware of their purpose, at that time escaped their hands, unwilling to return without any one, brought with them these two infirm persons, whom they led prisoners to Leeuwaarden. There they continued some time in confinement together. During this period they greatly rejoiced with each other in God their Maker, so that the love which is stronger than death, and harder than the grave, appeared in a very remarkable manner. After this, by the sentence of death, it was decreed that they should both be drowned. The sentence was very indignantly received by Tys. It distressed him exceedingly. "They drown cats and dogs," said he. From this sentence they sought exemption; they desired to be executed at the gallows, that they might attain the crown with their beloved brethren, and that bystanders might hear and see for what cause they died. But this was refused them, and they were executed according to the sentence. As if their persecutors were ashamed to put to death such miserable persons, they were both crammed, at midnight, into one sack, with their mouths gagged, and thrown into a flat-bottomed boat, and plunged, outside the city wall,

Rev. ii. 13.
Acts xxii. 3.
Col. iii. 16.
Rom. xv.
Cant. viii. 6.
2 Esdras ii. 42.
Matt. vii. 24.
Matt. x. 26.

into the canal. Fastened to the boat, they were dragged along the canal until they expired. Thus were removed these bright lights and pious witnesses of Christ, they
Wisd. ii. 14. being offensive to their sight. But God, the righteous one, who is with his people in the water and the fire,
Isa. xliii. 2. will, in his own time, avenge the deed, and give these, his worthy children, everlasting rest and peace with Him. This murder, committed in darkness, shall, at the great day (when all secrets shall be brought to light), be righteously avenged.

On this, see a hymn in the "Historical Hymn Book."

JOOS KIND.—ANNO 1553.

A letter of confession of Joos Kind, imprisoned at Kortrijk, where he resigned his life at the stake for the testimony of Jesus, in the year 1553.

2 Cor. i. 4. Grace be with you, and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall comfort and strengthen
Eph. vi. 11. us by his Holy Spirit, that we, stedfast in the faith, may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;
1 Pet. v. 8, 9. who (as Peter says) *goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking*
Eph. vi. 12. *whom he may devour.* Be it known to you, dear friends,
[151.] that I have to endure a great conflict with the carnal men. They assail me with artful reasonings, seeking to draw me away from obedience to my beloved Lord, although I hope that the Lord will stand by me; of which, indeed, I have no doubt. For God, when comforting His people,
Isa. xlix. 15. speaketh by the prophet Esaias, *Although a mother should forsake her child, yet will I not forsake thee;* which the Lord (whose praise every tongue shall speak) wonderfully confirms in me. Yea, had I as much paper as I have ever written upon, and likewise time to write, yet never

could I describe the joy and gladness I experience: yea, my joy is unspeakable. Psa. cl. 6.

But N. is sick; he begs that you will earnestly pray to the Lord on his behalf; for although he is ready to go to the flames, he is unable to cope with the enemies of the cross. They assail him with artful reasonings; even as the devil, their teacher, with much subtlety came and tempted our Saviour in the wilderness, as it is written in the Gospel. Did he then employ his craft with our Saviour? So, then, I am not discouraged if I, too, have in measure a conflict with him. For, dear friends, it were easy to withstand them, did they employ mere reasoning; but they assail one with lies. Their father is a liar, as our Saviour told them, and they have the nature of their father. This, on one occasion, they showed to me, the whole of which I cannot now inform you; but I hope the Lord will enable me, by his grace, to write you a little of their carnal dealings with me. Know, then, that Ronse and Polet came to the prison on Saturday afternoon, and sent for me to come to them. When I came, I asked them, "What they desired of me." They said, "It will be told you." They inquired my age. I said, "I do not know; if you wish to know that accurately, you must inquire of my mother." 1 Thess. v. 25. Phil. iii. 18. Matt. iv. 3. John viii. 44.

Ronse. "Tell us as nearly as you can."

Joos. "Between twenty and thirty."

The scribe however wrote, "Between thirty and forty."

Ronse. "When were you last at confession?"

Joos. "Why do you ask that?"

Ronse. "I wish to know."

Joos. "You have not caught me then; you know well how it is."

Ans. "We do."

Joos. "Whence do you come; in whose name have you come to me?"

Ans. "In God's name."

Joos. "That I do not believe."

Qu. "Why?"

Joos. "Because to know my mind you have arrested
Matt. x. 5. me. None whom the Lord sent out to preach put men into prison. When he sent them forth, *he commanded*
Matt. x. 14. *them, that wherever they came, if men received them not, they should shake off the dust from their feet, and depart thence.*

Polet. "You must have read that Paul delivered over
1 Cor. v. 5. some to the devil."

Joos. "I pray you, show me where Paul led them to prison."

Polet. "I do not know."

Joos. "Why, then, do you attempt to quote the Scriptures when you do not understand them? Yea, more than that, why arrest persons in order to bring them to the faith, even if yours were the true faith, which I do not admit; for I hold you not to be of God."

Qu. "Why?"

1 Sam. xv. 22. *Joos.* "Because the Lord saith, *To obey is better than sacrifice;* you are not obedient to him."

Qu. "Wherein?"

Matt xviii. 12. *Joos.* Because Christ commanded that we should show the right way to those that have gone astray. You say that I have gone astray; why, then, have you not pointed out to me the right way? I seek no other than the right."

Ans. "For that purpose we are come."

Joos. "Then you should have come to my dwelling."

Ans. "We knew not where you lived."

Joos. "You knew very well where to send the bailiff for me."

Ans. "Had you been a good sheep, it would not have been needful."

Matt. xviii. 13. *Joos.* "Christ left the ninety-nine, and went to seek the one that was lost."

Ronse then said, "Do you not consider me to be your superior, appointed by our holy father the pope, and our gracious lord the emperor?"

Joos. "I know no master but Christ." Matt. xxiii. 8.

Qu. "Do you, then, regard the emperor as nothing?"

I said that I was content to regard him as my superior after the flesh. They then wrote, that I acknowledged no superior but Christ in spiritual things, and the emperor in temporal.

Ronse then said, "When were you last at confession? tell me."

Joos. "I do not wish to say any thing to you here."

Qu. "Why?"

Joos. "Before the judges, at a full tribunal, I will readily speak."

"There," said they, "it will cost you your life to say any thing to which any criminality may attach."

Qu. "Tell me, what do you hold concerning infant baptism?"

I was then obliged to speak, and said, "Nothing."

Ronse. "Indeed? what baptism then do you hold?"

Joos. "I know of but one faith, and one baptism." Mark xvi. 16.

Ronse. "How long is it since you were baptized?"

Joos. "Six months, or thereabouts."

That they wrote down.

Qu. "What do you hold concerning the church of Rome?"

"I do not agree with it in a single point."

That was likewise noted down. They put to me so many questions that I said to them, "I have freely confessed my faith, and for it I am ready to lay down my life at the stake; therefore, be content now that you know my belief." They urged me still with many questions. I said, "Leave me, you are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Go; the grounds of my faith, which I have freely Phil. iii 18. [152]

confessed, are known to you. Do to me what you please.
2 Macc. vii. These limbs I possess by the favour of God, and am ready by his grace to resign them, yea to devote them to his divine glory." They said much; but I replied, "Go away; come no more to me, for ye are against God. Do
Matt. xii. 30. you not fear the Lord? Look at what is written in the
Matt. xiii. 30. 13th of Matthew of the tares of the field. You say that I am evil. The Lord has said that the tares should be let grow until the harvest."

Ans. "If we let the tares grow up all will be destroyed."

Polet. "Does not Augustine say this?"

Joos. "Speak not of Augustine; I know him not. I hold no doctrines but those of the apostles and prophets;
Gal. i. 8. and the instructions that our Saviour brought down from heaven, from the mouth of his heavenly Father, and sealed with his precious blood. For these I am willing to go to the flames; but Augustine, Gregory, Ambrose, I do not know."

Ronse. "But do you not believe that our blessed Saviour remains in the holy sacrament?"

Joos. "That I do not believe."

Ronse. "Where is He then?"

Mark xvi. 19. *Joos.* "At the right hand of his heavenly Father, and in
Matt. xxiv. 30. the last day he will come in the glory of his Father, to judge the quick and the dead. Tremble at that fearful judg-
Matt. iii. 8. ment, and amend, and put on sackcloth. Repent, and go to the people whom you allure to your false worship, and warn them. You are the murderers of their souls, for you say that, from the days of Peter, you have had the keys of heaven, and that they have always remained
Matt. xxiii. 13. with you. Christ said truly, that you have the keys, but will not enter in yourselves, and them that would enter in you hinder."

Ronse. "Who baptized you? Did Giles the Baptist[m] baptize you?"

Joos. "You know how I am situated; be content."

Polet. "It was Adam Pastor."[n]

Ronse. "Or David Joris." I was silent.

Ronse. "Tell me, Joos, who were your godfathers and godmothers?"

"I know of none."

Ronse. "Your witnesses?"

Joos. "I have told you that it took place; now be satisfied; for I trust in the Lord, that he will so keep the door of my lips, that I shall not tell you, though you were to tear me into pieces." They put many questions to me. I said, "Leave me, for you are not of God." Psa. cxli. 1. John viii. 47.

Ans. "We are."

Joos. "Away! away from me; leave me; and come to me no more." Much more passed, which it were too long to write. At last they went away; and I was led back to my cell.

On Sunday I was fetched into the justices' room. The magistrates were there assembled; also Salome and Master Cornelis, the dean of Kestenne, Ronse, and Polet. I was seated in the midst of them, well secured and guarded by two thief-takers. I said, "Gentlemen, what do you desire?"

Ronse. "We will tell you."

My confession was then read, which had been taken down in the prison. They inquired if I was still in the same mind?

[m] [See note, vol. i. p. 306.]

[n] [Adam Pastor was a native of Westphalia, and a companion of Menno Simons in the early years of his ministry. While a Lutheran Pastor he bore the name of Rudolph Martini. At a later period he appears to have adopted Arian sentiments, and was on this account excluded from the fellowship of the Baptist churches. Ottius, Annal. Anab. p. 109. Krohn's Melchior Hoffman, p. 241. Trechsel, Antitrin. i. 16.]

I said, "Yes, and that for it I was ready to die in the flames."

Ronse asked, "If I did not believe that Christ had taken his flesh of Mary?"

I said, "No."

It seemed as if M. Cornelis would have fainted away. He blessed and crossed himself very often. They were all agitated, and spoke some time concerning it; but they infused their venom into the magistrates, and persuaded them, saying, "True, it is thus written; but he is without understanding; and the scripture will support it;" and they brought many far-fetched arguments in proof; and bored the gentlemen's ears therewith, and asked me many crafty questions. I said, "I have confessed my faith to you, let that suffice. I entreat you, not as though I were worthy of it, but by that crimson blood of our dear Lord, to leave me in peace. You have my belief, and I am in your hands; be satisfied, do with me what you please."

Jer. xxvi. 14

Ronse then asked me if I had not attended anywhere, and conjured me three times, by my baptism, to say who were present.

I told him that I would not tell him a word.

Ronse. "You have renounced your baptism. Menno will not take it well of you to deny your baptism."

Joos. "I know my faith and baptism; but with your adjuration I have nothing to do. For this I might take you to be sorcerers."

Polet then said; "Men may swear."

Matt. v. 34.

Joos. "Look at Matt. v. and see if Christ has not forbidden it:—*Swear not at all.*"

They said, "No."

I said, "Yea."

Polet then looked into a large Bible, which they had brought with them, and found it as I had said.

M. Cornelius then said: "This Bible is false, in our Latin Bible it stands otherwise."

Joos. "Bring your false book to me. Why do you say that it is false? It is published *by privilege*, and declared authentic. You, too, have examined it."

Ans. "I have not examined it."

Joos. "One of the learned at Louvain has."[o]

Ronse then suggested to M. Cornelis.

Ronse: "It is true, it was examined, and found correct; but the printer had a servant, who falsified it while his master was gone into the city." Mark how wilfully they lie.

Ronse asked me how it was that I so hastily believed one whom I might never see again, and suffered myself to be baptized by him, while I would not believe them, whom I saw daily; yea, them that were there present, and who then, and before then (as they said), had instructed me; and why would I not believe him, my [153] pastor, who daily preached the gospel?"

I replied, "Because he was given to lying; and because I had heard him preach that it was no where found written that Mary was a mother and a virgin. But (he said) what their church taught respecting it must be believed: therefore (said I) I will not hear him. For I have read in Isaiah, and in Matthew, and in other places, to the contrary. Having heard such falsehoods from your own lips, I have since then heard neither you nor any other of you; neither shall I, I hope, by the grace of God." He denied it; but I affirmed it again, and offered my body to be tortured on the rack against his. But to that he had no inclination, and said, "Men should not be put to the torture." Isa. vii. 14.

[o] [This was probably the version of James le Fiore. A complete edition of the Bible was first printed at Antwerp, in 1530. The revised edition of the Divines of Louvain appeared in 1550. Horne, Intro. vol. ii. part 2, p. 97.]

Ronse. "You say that our church is not a true church, because we are not without fault. Are you faultless? There are amongst you murderers, because we would not believe them, nor receive their doctrine."

Joos. "Have you seen such things in me, or anything that is unbecoming? I am here, in the hands of the judges; let them punish me for it."

Ronse. "We know nothing against you."

Joos. "Do not tell me, then, what another does; nor impute to me the evil that another commits. One is not to bear another's burden; neither I yours, nor you mine; *the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*" They said much more, which is not worth writing. They affirmed, further, that Christ had said, *that the scribes and pharisees sat in Moses' seat,* and that he had bidden us do whatsoever they commanded, but not after their works: "therefore," said they, "do what we counsel you, but not after our works; Christ teaches that."

Gal. vi. 5.

Ezek. xviii. 4.

Matt. xxiii. 2.

Joos. "Who, did Christ say, sat in Moses' seat?"

Ans. "The pharisees."

Joos. "Does that scripture belong to you?"

Ans. "Yes."

Joos. "Then you confess that you are of that generation."

M. Cornelis, the parish priest, then asked me, "Why I did not believe in a single article held by the Romish church? Did I not believe Christ to have been crucified, as the church of Rome does? Was not that one article? Why did I believe the Gospel according to Matthew to be gospel, since it is no where so written; and he wished to prove to me that Paul had written before the evangelists."

I said, "Prove to me that Paul wrote before Matthew."

M. Cornelis. "What have you to do with that?"

Joos. "Have I nothing to do with it? it concerns my life and soul, according to you."

M. Cornelis. "He is conquered."

Joos. "Be silent; you are not worth talking to; and take care not to say, after my departure, that you have overcome me, or that I was possessed of a devil, or condemn me before ignorant people, to deceive them." Luke vii. 33.

Then said Ronse, "You are damned, if you persevere in this course."

Joos. "Why?"

Ronse. "Because you believe not."

Joos. "I do believe; and am so firm in my faith that I would rather go into the fire than trangress in a single point." Much more took place, too long to write. I was at last led back again to prison, and bound with two fetters. I said, "I am ready not to be bound only, but to die the most shameful death for the name of the Lord." Acts xxi. 13. Polet came on Monday with another, and asked me "how I was going on." I said, "Never was it so well with me, for which I praised the Lord." They said, they were very glad of it.

Polet then asked Joos, "Can your cause be a good one, and you yourself be the church? The Germans have a church, and the English have a church; but where are the members of your church? You alone are no church. Let us hear if you have a little flock, and who your members are?"

I then said, five or six times, "*Get thee behind me, Satan, and depart from me;*" and they both hastened away. I added, "You speak now, but in the judgment another will speak." And I saw them no more. I have heard that I am to be severely tortured; for they think to learn from me all particulars; but I trust in the Lord that He will keep the door of my lips. Pray for me, that the Lord will stand by me. They thirst for blood; but they can do no more than the Lord permits them. I commend myself into the Lord's hands. Whatever you

Matt. xvi. 23.

Matt. xxv. 21.

1 Thess. v. 25.

John xix. 11.

hear beyond the contents of this letter, regard as not true. In testimony of the truth, I hope to seal this letter with my blood. To this end may God grant His grace, that His name may thereby be magnified.

Another Letter or Confession of Joos Kind.

TO THE GLORY OF THE FATHER.

Rev. i. 9. I, Joos Kind, a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus Christ, by the grace of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, entreat and exhort all dear friends, and all dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, that they will not only regard my prayer or admonition, and live accordingly; but that each one (as I hope by the help of God) will set himself to Matt. iii. 8. observe the admonition of the Lord; and apply himself to the amendment of his sinful life; even as I doubt not each one does, who, with his whole heart, fears the Lord. [154] For the scripture says, "He that feareth the Lord will Ecclus. xv. 13. do good;" yea, *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of* Ecclus. i. 16. *wisdom.* Seeing, then, that the fear of the Lord guides us to virtue, let us fear the Lord; for Christ Jesus himself requires this of us, with his blessed mouth, where Matt. x. 28. he saith: *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear him who after he has killed, is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* I exhort you, then, with these words, and not with these words only, but with the whole substance of the scripture, that each one Luke xi. 28. should willingly strive to keep the same. For Christ Matt. vii. 24. saith, *Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every*

one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

Let each one, therefore, take pains, and diligently give heed to redeem the perilous time; for Paul says, *Redeem the time, because the days are evil.* Observe, therefore, the times, and exhort one another, for the distress demands it. Let every one be armed, as Paul admonishes: *For we wrestle not alone against flesh and blood.* Paul hath rightly instructed us. The Lord be praised, who hath so faithfully according to his promise, stood by me with these weapons; as I have indeed experienced, when brought before the adversary. He hath opened my mouth, (praise be rendered to him!) so that, through the mercy of the Lord, I have been able to defend myself with his word, five times to withstand my enemies; and not my enemies only, but the enemies of the cross of Christ, as you shall presently hear.

Eph v. 16.

Eph. vi. 12.

Luke xxi. 15.

Phil. iii. 18.

Be it then known to you that on the day called St. Thomas (by Babel) I was lying in the cell, in which I always lay, when in the afternoon, I heard that certain carnal and worldly men of influence were come into the prison, and with them the high bailiff. The officers then came and said, "Joos, come out." I said in my heart, *Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.* Then I came before them: Ronse and Polet raised their hoods, and said, "Joos, God be with you," and bowed to me. I likewise raised my cap, saying, "God is worthy of such salutation, yea, and of more; I am ready to lay down the members which he in his mercy has lent to me, for his name and glory. The Lord is worthy of this from me, for we were so dear to him, that he underwent the bitter pains of death for us."

Psa li. 15.

Matt. xxvii. 50.

The inquisitors then said, "Joos, have you not reflected on the matter? Will you not yet retract?"

Psa. xxxiv. 16. I said, "Yes, always, what is evil. Why did you not ask me that, when I ran on in wickedness, and practised all kinds of unrighteousness?"

They said, "You could have gone to the preaching." They now inquired concerning my faith, which I freely confessed to them.

They then said, "Speak to us, to say if you have not reflected on the matter."

Joos. "To you I say nothing; for you are not of God.

Rom. v. 6. How can I believe you? Christ has died for me; on him I believe; but you would not die for me, neither the one dean, nor the other (there were two deans present, Ronse and the oil-maker); neither this parish priest nor that would be willing to die for me. I am a prisoner, for life or death; die for me, and set me free."

Ans. "Who teaches that?"

John x. 11. *Joos.* "Christ; and he saith, *the good Shepherd loves his sheep, and lays down his life for them.* You say that if I die in this persuasion, I must be damned."

Ronse. "Yes."

Joos. "It is a wonder then, that you should put me to death, seeing that I have opinions for which I shall certainly be condemned; let me go till I change my views."

Matt. xxvii. 2. "We will leave you."

Joos. "Yes, and give me up."

1 Cor. v. 3—5. *Polet.* "Paul gave some over into the hands of the devil."

Joos. "And you do so too; you have condemned me; be satisfied with this, and deliver me into the hands of the executioner. Paul did not do so; nor did Christ so teach,

Matt. xxvii. 19. see Matt. xxviii.; Mark xvi.; where He saith, *Go, preach the Gospel to every creature;* Christ did not teach us to

shut up in cells, men who will not believe you, or to load their legs with heavy fetters. Did all who heard Christ preach, believe on Him? Did they all believe that heard the apostles preach?" Rom. x. 16.

Ans. "No."

Joos. "Were then all, who did not believe the apostles, put to death?"

Ans. "No."

Joos. "How comes it to pass then, that since the apostles did not do so, you, who say you are the successors of the apostles, take upon you to put us to death, were we even as wicked as you say? but you have a better opinion of us than you express."

Polet. "I will tell you. Have you not read, that Elijah had Baal's priests put to death?" 1 Kings xviii. 40.

Joos. "Yes, I have; and this is to be your lot; for you serve Baal, and tipple and gormandize with Jezebel, more than they ever did." 1 Kings xviii. 19.

Ans. "What does that concern you? you are always looking at our works."

Joos. "Christ hath taught me to know the tree by its fruits; and saith, that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, nor a good tree evil fruit, &c. And I say, since your works are not good, neither are you." [15]5 Matt. vii. 18.

Qu. "Are you then good?"

Joos. "That you have not heard me say; none is good save God alone, and if we should say that we were good, which we do not, you on the contrary would say that we are corrupt, for when we were with you in the sheriff's hall, you said that we put to death, by stabbing, the men that will not believe us; but no one will credit it." Matt. xix. 17.

Ronse. "That I say still."

Joos. "Where have you ever seen me do such things? Since I have taught the people, as you say, have I stabbed or struck any one dead, or injured a hair, by my teaching?"

Ans. "We know nothing of the kind of you."

Joos. "I know such things of *you;* for you burn or murder those who will not embrace your false religion. You have truly condemned yourselves in this matter."

2 Sam. xii. 5.

Ans. "We make no progress in this way; let us dispute concerning the faith."

Joos. "I will not dispute here alone."

They then said, "Do you acknowledge yourself then, to be conquered?" intending to give me over to the judges if I had said "Yes." But I said "No, I do not; wherein have you prevailed over me? I have said, not once, but fifty times,—show me, from the Gospel, a better faith, and I will recant."

Ans. "Let us then begin."

Joos. "Very well; before the justice-hall, and in presence of a great fire, into which he that is conquered shall be thrown."

Ans. "That will not do."

The under-sheriff said, "You wish to raise an uproar."

Joos. "That you have done already, in apprehending me. Had you suffered me to labour at Kortrijk, it would not have been as it is, nor yet in seven years."

Polet. "We will not take you there, lest you spread your poison."

Joos. "You ought to come before the justice-hall; the more spectators the better. If I hold a false doctrine, and you the truth, are you ashamed to maintain it before the people? Take me there, and show me that I am in the wrong, you will then stop the people's mouths, and may say, when you have overcome me, 'This man taught contrary to the Christian faith; we have now proved by the Scripture that he is in the wrong,' and then throw me into the fire; and the people will be edified. If you will not do this, then are you unwilling that the people should know the truth."

Ronse. "You will not be brought there to speak; when you are brought there, you will be prevented from speaking."

Joos. "Why? The people have five senses; and they who have five senses will easily understand whether I speak that which is true or false."

Ronse. "Care will be taken that you do not speak there."

Joos. "Then put me at once into a sack, and drown me by night, that none see it; yet He will see it who search- 1 Sam. xvi. 7. eth the heart and the reins; there will be people enough to see it one day; and He will see and avenge it; with him I leave it. I am ready to lay down this body, whether in the fire, or in the water, whether before the Town Hall, or here in this fire (the fire on the hearth); if it be not large enough, make it larger."

Again they desired to discuss the matter, and said that they were sent by God as his deputies. I said, "Not so; for you have purchased your benefices, or they have been given to you, or you have gained them by service; but they whom God sends have, from the beginning of the world, been sent in another way." They said that they would show, from the Scripture, that they were sent. I replied, "Prove it."

Ans. "Here it is. The keys were given to Peter, and he was pope. They were given to him and his successors."

Joos. "Show me that there are successors."

Ans. "That can easily be done."

Joos. "Proceed then."

Ronse then read in a Testament, Matthew xvi., where Christ asked, *Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?* to the place where Christ saith, *I give unto thee the keys;* but there was not a word about successors He then said, "But, of course, you have heard it, have you not,

Joos? it is very long, or I would read it out; it would be tedious."

Joos. "I wish you to read on."

Ronse. "How far?"

Joos. "Till you come to the place where he speaks of successors."

Matt. xvi. 18. *Ronse.* "You heard that he saith, *Upon this rock I will build my church.* She is thus built on St. Peter, and he was pope."

Joos. "Christ is the foundation, as Paul speaks, 1 Cor. i ii.11, saying, *Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.* Peter is not the foundation, neither was the church founded on Peter; but on the Matt xvi. 16. confession of faith which Peter made, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;* therefore Christ is the foundation. But," said I, "let us speak of the keys. You go from the keys to the church, and yet say that I run from one thing to another; keep you to one, and show me, as you have asserted, that Christ saith, 'I give the keys to thee and to thy successors.'" They said, "That we will soon show you." "But hear," said Polet; and he brought forward some artful argument. I said, "I am not to be put off with arguments; show it me from the book."

Ronse replied, "We know it by heart, so do you; hear us repeat it from memory." I said, "Read it." They said, "Is it not the same whether we read or repeat it?"

[156] *Joos.* "Listen to me. I tell you I am not satisfied with bare assertions." As they would not read it, I spoke to the high bailiff and another, and said, "Gentlemen, I request that you will support me in this matter, and make them read it; or I say that you are oppressors and not judges." They then said, "Read it for him." Matt. xvi. was then read. Ronse read it. When he found it not, he turned as white as snow. He then said, "It is not here."

Polet. "Those precise words do not stand there, but the sense is given in Matt. xxviii.," and he read, *I am with you to the end of the world.*

Joos. "That is not saying, 'I give to thee the keys, and to thy successors.'"

Polet. "If you will have those precise words, actually, they are not there; but why make so much ado about it?"

Joos. "Only because you said that you would prove it to me."

Ronse. "Be silent; you are not worth speaking with."

Joos. "Why should I be silent, since you have obtained, by your false mandates, that neither procureur nor advocate is allowed to speak for us, not even a friend. If you do not wish me to speak, you should have left me in my cell; but I will not be silent, neither for your sakes nor for any other man's. I am neither a thief, nor a murderer, nor a violator of women; why should I forbear to speak? I will defend myself, for my life is at stake, and will not be silent while I can move my tongue; but be you silent; you are not worthy to speak, for you are murderers of souls, and enemies of the cross of Christ." Job xxvii. 3. Phil. iii. 18.

Again they proposed to go on with the discussion. I said, "Before the Town Hall, but not here."

Ans. "You will not be brought there." "Well, do then what you please. I confessed to you my faith when I first came here, and I have said before, more than fifty times, and tell you again, that I do not like your wares, nor approve of any article the church of Rome maintains." Jer. xxvi. 14.

Ronse. "Do you not approve of the sacrament? Let us hear what you think of it."

Joos. "An idol; a morsel of flour of meal; and if I had your oil, I would smear my shoes with it."

Ronse. "We hear that you are audacious enough for it." Then a contention began. They thought to overwhelm

me; but I boldly defended myself with the word of the Lord, as becomes a servant who loves his master. And
Luke xxi. 14 the Lord enabled me so to speak, that during three hours I spoke not one sentence which they were able to meet. They then referred to the incarnation, which they wished
Matt. i. 1. to bring out of the mute letter, Matt. i. *This is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David.* To which I replied, "It is written, Matt. xxii. 42, when Christ asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ? whose son*
Psa. cx. 1. *is he? They said David's.* He said to them, *How, then, doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son, and no man was able to answer him a word.*" I
Heb. vii. 1. further brought forward to them the type of Melchisedec,
Rev. xxii. 16. and the last chapter of the Apocalypse, that He is the root of David; which they would not hear, but kept to their dumb text. When I saw that they would not acknowledge their error, I said, "If you wish to speak of the incarnation, or any other matters of faith, come before the Townhall." Then said Polet, "Who is to judge which is right or wrong?"

Joos. "These good gentlemen."

Polet. "They do not understand the Scriptures."

Joos. "They understand them well enough for you to dispute here, or in the Council Chamber; they ought to understand them well enough to dispute before the Townhall. And if they do not understand the Scripture, they ought to be ashamed that they are judges in this matter." There was so much said, that a handful of papers would not contain their craftiness.

I commend you all, dear friends, dear brethren and
Eph. vi. 11. sisters in the Lord, to his hands. I beseech them all valiantly to arm themselves, for it is needful; and if they come where I am, that they do not enter into disputation;

for, if it were possible, they would draw us away from the truth. I am so happy, that I feel unable to express the gladness or rejoicing I experience; and I hope that the seal of this letter will be the laying down of my body. To this end may the Lord afford me his grace, that his name may be praised; for I seek nought but the Lord's glory. No more: remain commended to the Lord, and to the word of his grace. Matt. xxiv. 24. Matt. v. 12. Acts xx. 30.

Pray to the Lord for me. I will heartily pray the Lord for you.

A PIOUS BROTHER PUT TO DEATH FOR THE WORD OF GOD, IN THE CITY OF VUREN, IN FLANDERS.—A.D. 1553. [158]

About the year 1553, a godly pious brother was put to death by the sword in the city of Vuren,[p] in Flanders, for the testimony of Jesus. He had to endure many severe conflicts with the papists, the opponents of the truth. But as a valiant hero of Christ, he feared not those who kill the body, but sought rather to please Him who, after this temporal death, is able to cast both body and soul into hell—into everlasting fire, where the worm dieth not, neither is the fire quenched. Rev. ii. 13. Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 4. Isa. li. 7, 12. Mark ix. 43.

By these considerations from God's word, he comforted his sorrowful wife (being pregnant), and whom he greatly loved; for he was very anxious, on account of her situation, that she might not think much of the tortures that men inflicted on him for the word of God. They condemned him to be executed by the sword, and he therefore took an affectionate leave of all his brethren; and, following the footsteps of his forerunner, Jesus, like a Isa. liii. 10.

p [Furnes, about twelve miles from Dunkirk.]

Acts xxviii. 31. Wisd. iii. 3. Matt. vii. 15. lamb, ascended the scaffold; but those evening wolves, that leave nothing till the morrow, and known by their treatment of these and others, retaining their wolvish nature, inflicted on him seven mortal blows, and, lastly, sawed off his head. The spectators, who beheld this martyr, many from distress, were bathed in tears. His poor pregnant wife lamented him greatly, and through sorrow died with her infant.

This excessively cruel and blood-thirsty murder many witnessed; but the great and faithful God, who regards as towards himself the sufferings of his own people, even as if the apple of his eye were touched, will, in his own time, be avenged of such. Oh! how will these bloody men excuse themselves, when the great Shepherd shall appear in the clouds, and require an account of this matter of their hands. But all the faithful, who lay down their lives for God, and have not dared to withhold from their Maker his divine honour, but have truly served him according to his word, these have the promise, from the lips of Jesus, that he will in return confess them before his Father in heaven; that it is the Father's good pleasure to give to this little company his glorious kingdom; and that all who suffer here with Christ for righteousness' sake, shall rejoice with God throughout eternity.

Zech. ii. 8. 1 Pet. v. 4. Heb. xiii. 20. Matt. x. 32. Luke xii. 8, 22. Matt. v. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 15.

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[159] PETER WITSES, MASON, STRANGLED AT THE STAKE, AT LEEUWAARDEN.

The confession of Peter Witses, mason, prisoner at Leeuwaerden,[q] *where, for the testimony of Jesus, he laid down his life in the year* 1553.

Qu. "What is your name?"

Ans. "Peter Witses."

Qu. "How old are you?"

[q] [Chief town of Friesland.]

Ans. "Twenty-seven years."

Qu. "When were you last at confession?"

Ans. "I confess every day, and acknowledge myself to be a sinner." Psa. li. 3.

Qu. "What is your opinion of the sacrament?"

Ans. "I consider it of great value."

Qu. "What do you think of the sacrament which the priest observes at Easter?

Ans. "Of that I think nothing."

Qu. "Christ said, *Take, eat; this is my body.*"

Ans. "It is true; but He spoke to those who were obedient to Him." Matt. xxvi. 26.

Qu. "Have you been re-baptized?"

Ans. "I know nothing of re-baptism. I was once baptized, and that according to God's command."

Qu. "How long ago is it?" Matt. xxviii. 19.

Ans. "About a year and a half."

Peter was then taken into a cellar. After sitting there about an hour, he was brought up before the gentlemen, and again questioned.

"Peter, you are misled, will you not permit yourself to be instructed?"

Ans. "Yes, willingly; he that refuseth correction and instruction will be miserable: take a Testament and instruct me." Prov. x. 17.

Qu. "We are not teachers. Will you not be instructed by the priests?"

Ans. "God is the best priest; he will instruct me; and by God's grace I will continue faithful." Isa. liv. 13.

Qu. "Some vagrant has been preaching to you." They said further, that they had read in the Old Testament, *that there were many children baptized.*

Peter answered, "I have read nothing of it. I have, indeed, read that Christ commanded believers to be baptized, Matt. xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 16, which was likewise

practised by the apostles, Acts ii. 38; and that Peter taught, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus, and ye shall receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost, promised to you and your children,* &c." He likewise quoted John iii. They then said, "Peter, you are deceived; are your brethren of the same mind?" He answered, "What do I know of my brethren? I can only speak of what God has given me; that I know." He further recited what Christ saith, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* Also, how that Christ came to John, at Jordan, to be baptized of him, that He might first fulfil all righteousness for us, and be an example to us, that we might follow his footsteps. And after Christ's sufferings, the apostles practised it with them that were his body, the church.

Mark xvi. 15.

Matt. iii. 13.

1 Pet. ii. 22.

Respecting their supper, he confessed that he by no means concurred in it. They admonished him by the gospel. He viewed every thing correctly; but replied that it was not said to their church. "Christ spoke," said he, "to his apostles, *Take, eat; this is my body, that shall be broken for you.* Likewise of the cup he said, *Drink ye all of it; it is the cup of the new testament in my blood, that is shed for many for the remission of sins.* Christians must observe it as Paul teaches the Corinthians; there we have it clearly given." They asserted the supper of which they ate and drank to be real flesh and blood, asking, if we likewise did not so eat and drink it?

Matt. xvi. 25.

Cor. x. 16.

Ans. "Christ said, *The flesh profiteth nothing* to eat, *the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.* Our church is not separate from Christ's body."

John vi. 63.

[Previous to his death, Witses addressed a brief exhortation to his brethren, and also a short epistle of comfort and encouragement to his wife.]

WILLIAM OF LOUVAIN.—A.D. 1554.

In the year 1554, was put to death, at Ghent in Flan- [160]
ders, for his testimony to the truth, a pious witness for Rev. i. 2.
God, named William of Louvain, the grandfather of Jan
Doom. He did not suffer for any wicked deed or heresy,
but for his testimony to the truth, and with a good con- 1 Pet. iv. 16.
science. For he had renounced the whore of Babylon, Rev. xviii. 4.
with her followers and false worship, and had united 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.
himself with Christ; following him in the regeneration
with a purified heart. He overcame the world, and all Matt. xix. 28.
that is therein, by faith; and finally obtained the end of 1 John v. 4.
his faith—the salvation of his soul, by grace through Christ 1 Pet. i. 9.
Jesus.

DAVID AND LEVINA.—A.D. 1554.

At Ghent, in Flanders, in the year 1554, was appre-
hended because he followed Christ and kept the command-
ments of God, a young brother named David. Being Matt. x. 38.
examined, he boldly confessed his faith. When asked
what he held concerning the sacrament, he said that he
esteemed it to be nothing but idolatry. A priest then
spoke to him and said, "My friend, you have greatly
erred, in having so readily confessed your faith; for it will
cost you your life, unless you consider in time." David
mildly answered, "I am ready for the name of Christ to Acts xxi. 13.
shed my blood, were it even here in this place; God is my Psa. xxvii. 5.
salvation; he will keep and preserve me from all evil."
The priest said, "It will not fare so easily with you as
to be put to death privately here; but we will burn you
publicly at a stake in the market-place, for an everlasting
shame." They afterwards led him to the tribunal, where
he was condemned to death, and his sentence read; that

he had fallen from the true faith into heresy, and therefore, agreeably to the emperor's proclamation, was sentenced to be strangled and burnt. David said, "Never will any one be able to show, by scripture, that the faith for which I must now die is heresy."

There was likewise sentenced to death a female named Levina, who preferred giving up not only her six dear children, but also life itself, rather than her dear Lord and bridegroom, Jesus Christ. When they came to the scaffold, David was about to kneel down to make his prayer to God, but he was prevented; and they were driven to
[161] the stakes. While standing there, David said to Levina,
Rom. viii. 18. "Rejoice, dear sister, for what we here suffer is not to be compared with that eternal joy which we anticipate." When they were about to be offered up they both ex-
Luke xxiii. 46. claimed, "Father, into thy hands we commend our spirit." A bag of gunpowder was then attached to each of them, and immediately they were strangled and burnt. But a wonderful work of God appeared, for when they were burnt, and the fire nearly extinguished, David was seen to move his head, so that the spectators exclaimed, "He is still alive!" The executioner taking a fork in his hand, pierced him three times in the bowels, so that the blood ran down; still he was seen to move. The executioner then fixing a chain round his neck, bound him to the stake, and so dislocated his neck.

Thus did these two godly persons persevere to the end
Psa. xxv. 2. with firm hope in God, who suffered them not to be ashamed; for they had built on the only foundation, there-
1 Cor. iii. 11. fore they shall never perish, but live through the ages of eternity.

[In the year 1555 six men were put to death in the market-place of Antwerp, for their testimony to the truth, after many unavailing attempts to turn them aside. One female was also arrested. Her love to Christ was

stronger than her love of life. Remaining steadfast she was drowned in the Scheldt.][r]

HANS PICHNER.—1555.

In the year 1555, Hans Pichner, of Salo, was arrested at Vorst, in Etschland[s] or Vintschgau. He was taken by the sergeants to Schlanders[t] before the justice, a cruel and vindictive tyrant. Hans was immediately cited before him, and by severe questions urged to betray those that had given him shelter; but as he would not do this, he was at once, on the same day, put to the rack, but all their tortures were unavailing. Very vexatious it was to them that they could extort nothing from him. Several times they stripped him, and let him hang in torture for hours on the ropes. So strained did he become, that he could not set a step, nor stand upon his feet, nor bring his hand to his mouth to eat. Nevertheless he could not be turned aside, but remained steadfast in the Lord. Afterwards, they bound him hand and foot, and kept him confined in a dark prison or dungeon more than half a year. Many learned men came to see if they could draw him aside, such as priests and monks, also some noblemen, who assailed him violently for two days and one entire night; but they were brought to shame, for he confounded them by the truth, and suffered not himself to be terrified.

Acts xii. 3.

Heb. xi. 35.

Psa. xl. 14.

After this they condemned him to death, and led him out to the place of execution, where he exhorted the people,

[r] [The names of these martyrs were Peter the cripple, Jan Doogscherder, Hans Borduerwerker, Franz Schwerdtfeger, Bartholomew, Rommeken, and Tanneken. The last was a native of Leyden.]

[s] [The vale of the Adige.]

[t] [The justice court at Schlanders was originally a convent of the Teutonic knights.]

Mark i. 15. who were numerously collected together, to repentance. He was then placed with his back against a stake, and so beheaded; for they had so dreadfully tortured and stretched him that he was unable to kneel. He nevertheless remained firm, cleaving to the Lord and his truth; and
Rev. iii. 10. God preserved him in the hour of temptation. Now, the
Rev. ii. 11. second death shall have no power over him; the fire everlasting he shall not behold. Attended by thousands
Heb. xii. 22 and tens of thousands of angels he shall go to the marriage
Rev. iii. 20. supper of the Lamb, clothed in white, with boundless joy for ever and for ever.[u]

CHRISTIAN.—1555.

In this year 1555, a brother named Christian, was apprehended, in Bavaria, and brought to Worms; and although he had not been long a member of the church, yet
Matt. xxvii. 2. he steadfastly adhered to the truth which he had received
Rev. ii. 10. and confessed. He held fast even unto death that which he had promised before God, in the covenant of Christian baptism, and through the divine power and strength attested his faith with his blood. He was executed by the
Heb. xi. 37. sword at Worms; he fought a good fight; he contended
Tim. iv. 7. for the truth, and finished his course with joy; he yielded

[u] [This martyrdom is found recorded in the MS. "Chronickel oder Denkbüchlein," now existing in the Hamburg City Library, and a copy of which I have been permitted to take. It is a manuscript of 216 pages, besides a brief introduction and index. It not only contains the names of martyrs recorded by Van Braght, with others that he has not mentioned, but many curious particulars of the settlement and choice of ministers, the erection of houses for worship, and events adverse or otherwise to the welfare of the churches in Moravia and some parts of Germany. I am indebted for this very unique volume to the kind labours of the Rev. Theophile Schlatter, now of Philadelphia, U. S.]

to no temptation, but would rather die courageously, than live disgracefully. Therefore is the crown of righteousness promised him, which the Lord shall give him at the last day, with all those that love his appearing.[v] 1 Cor. ix. 25. 2 Tim. iv. 8.

DIGNA PETERS,

AFTER MANY TROUBLES, PUT INTO A SACK AT DORDRECHT IN PUTTOX TOWER, AND DROWNED FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, ON THE 23RD OF NOVEMBER, 1555.

Concerning the martyrdom of Digna Pieters, who resigned her life at Dort.

As it is commonly written, in the fifteen hundred and fifty-fifth year after the birth of our Lord, some of the saints of God were ill-treated at Dordrecht in Holland: among others one is expressly mentioned, named Digna Peters, a godly woman, who, being a citizen of the place, had likewise a citizenship in the spiritual city of God, the church of Christ on earth. On account of her uprightness, she had also the right of citizenship in the new and heavenly Jerusalem, wherein, and of which, by the word of truth, she was born again.

She was, on account of her faith, committed to prison.

This woman, on account of the faith which she had in common with other dear friends and children of God, was thrown into prison, and hardly treated in various ways, in order that she might be induced to renounce the faith.

When they could proceed no further, they sought to put an end to her life.

But, as they could proceed no further with her, forasmuch as she was built upon the immoveable corner-stone, Jesus Christ, they determined to put an end to her citizenship, and, at the same time, to her life.

What the Chamber of Justice, in the first place, did thereto.

The Chamber of Justice, assisted by the alderman and council of the said city, and by sound of bell,

[v] [This martyr is also named in the MS. "Chronickel." He is there said never to have been with the church in Moravia. He was probably arrested on his way thither through Bavaria.]

therefore, disfranchised her at the entrance of the town hall, on the 17th of November of the said year, in order further to deal with her, as the justices of the said chamber should judge to be proper.

[163] Of these transactions, the following act in the book of Klockeslag, deposited with the secretary, remains, although nearly obliterated by length of time:—

Actum per Campanam that is, done by the bell, (or by sound of the bell.)

"*Actum per Campanam, the* 17*th* November,* 1555.

"Whereas Digna Peters, burgess of this city, now a prisoner, has, before the justices and council of this city and free from fetters, openly confessed and acknowledged herself to have been re-baptized, &c.(*a*) and likewise to have attended(*b*) assemblies, contrary to the faith, the holy sacraments, and other services and ceremonies of the holy church; therefore the chamber of the aforesaid city has disfranchised, and hereby disfranchise, the said Digna Peters, in order that she may be further proceeded against, as the aforesaid chamber, according to the exigence and nature of the matter, shall find proper."

* The 27th November appears to stand in the book; but must be the 17th, as appears from the following execution.

(*a*) And, of unsound judgment concerning baptism, &c., appears to have been read.

(*b*) Conventicles, &c.

Here follows, in the same book, what the Chamber of Justice six days afterwards did against her, whereof the following words are found:—

"*Digna Peters drowned.*

Whether the city at that time had the custom of reading aloud the sentence of death in matters of faith, before the Tribunal, we have not been able to ascertain.

"On this day, the 23rd November, anno 1555, Digna Peters, by virtue of a certain sentence, passed and pronounced by the justices and council of this city (by the mouth of Wouter Barthouts, judge in law), was put into a sack at Puttox tower and drowned in the water."

Extracted from the book of Klockeslag, of the city of Dordrecht, commencing 1554 *the last of October, and ending the* 16*th June,* 1573.

This was the end of this valiant heroine of Jesus, who,

although privately murdered in a tower (like Joris Wippe and others), will hereafter in the great day of the Lord be brought forth; then will be seen the difference between those that did this and her who suffered it; *for every one shall receive the things done in his body, whether they be good or bad.* 2 Cor. v. 10

The Puttox tower, where this martyrdom took place, stood close to the gate of Groothooft in the city of Dordrecht, but afterwards, through length of time (or as a remarkable warning of God on account of this murder), fell down: in place of which a house at present exists, in a hard stone of the front of which house the following words are cut:— With reference to the place where the aforesaid execution was performed.

"Through the falling of the Puttox tower was I built."

Concerning the persons who, in the same year, served in the trial of prisoners ordered for criminal execution, or punishment of death, and who therefore performed this work, they were the following, according to the account of Johan van Beverwyk, on the government of the city of Dordrecht:— Together with the names of the persons by whom it was executed.

Adriaen van Blyenberg Adriaenz, being then sheriff, together with these nine alderman,—

Jacob Adriaensz.
Philips van Beverwyk Ogiersz.
Maerten Schrevel Dirksz.
Jacob Oem Heeren Jacobsz.
Pieter Muys Jacobsz.
Schrevel Heeren Ockersz.
Wouter Barthoutsz.
Cornelis van Beveren Heeren Claesz.
Wouter van Drenkwaert Heeren Wilmsz.

But whether all these aldermen, with the sheriff, agreed in the above sentence, or that Wouter Barthouts, who was present at her death, was the principal abettor in this work, is not expressed; however, it appears probable, that Doubting whether all the aldermen together consented to this sentence; or

principally Wouter Barthouts, &c.

the greater number could not have felt much satisfaction therein, since Wouter Barthouts alone, it seems, with the executioner and the officers of justice, was present at her death.

RENEWAL OF THE SANGUINARY PROCLAMATIONS OF THE EMPEROR CHARLES V., BY PHILIP II., KING OF SPAIN.

AGAINST THE BAPTISTS, OR (SO-CALLED) ANABAPTISTS. ANNO 1556.

The emperor Charles V. hitherto on his own account, had caused the blood-shedding of the saints in the Netherlands; but at this time his son, Philip II. followed him by renewing the old proclamations.

Hitherto the emperor, Charles V., had alone on his own account shed the blood of the saints in the Netherlands, and revived the abominable tyranny of the inquisition, which was permitted to employ fire, water, and sword in inflicting punishment upon them. But in this year, his son Philip II., king of Spain, following in his father's footsteps, instead of diminishing the restraints upon conscience, renewed and confirmed all the preceding old, cruel, and sanguinary proclamations which his father had published against the so-called heretics: and in particular the cruel proclamation which was issued on the 25th of September of the year 1550;[w] the contents of which we have hitherto withheld, but which, as renewed anno 1556, we shall now give, not however in every particular, but only so far as it is especially directed against the baptists and their doctrine.

In which Prince William I. defended himself.

In the tract, in which the Prince of Orange, William I., vindicates himself against the falsehoods unjustly put forth by his enemies, printed 1569, mention is thus made of this matter:—

[w] [See vol. 1, p. 564.]

[x] P. 165, Letter L. vj.

" *Of the ordinances and proclamations, made perpetual and general, and everywhere published, of the date of the 25th of September,* 1550, *renewed and confirmed by his majesty the king, in the year* 1556, *&c.*" [164]

" In like manner, we forbid all lay persons, and others, to communicate and dispute concerning the holy scripture, whether in public or private, especially in doubtful and difficult points, or to teach, expound, or interpret the holy scripture, except they be learned in theology, and have taken their degrees in divinity and canon law at some renowned university, or have otherwise been admitted thereto by the ordinaries. It being however understood, that this shall not apply to those who with simplicity fully communicate the said holy scripture, quoting the exposition of holy and approved doctors; but to those who, to mislead others, or to teach and instruct them in what is forbidden, maintain and teach contrary to the ordinances of our mother (the holy church) wicked and false propositions and doctrines, who are notoriously regarded as heretics, who neither preach, defend, assert, nor maintain, publicly or in secret, any doctrines of the aforesaid authors.

All lay persons are forbidden to communicate, or to dispute concerning the holy Scripture.

" On penalty, if any one soever be found to have transgressed, or to have done anything contrary to the particulars above stated, of being punished as seditious persons, and disturbers of our state, and of the general tranquillity, and as such, executed,—

On pain of being executed as seditious persons. 1. By the sword. 2 By the earth. 3. By fire.

" To wit, the men with the sword; and the women by being buried alive, if they do not maintain or defend their errors.* But, in case they persist in their errors, opinions, or heresies, they shall be executed by fire; and in every case all their effects are declared to be confiscated and forfeited to our use.

* An &c. stands in the proclamation.

All alienations, gifts, seizures, sales, &c. of the accused are regarded as void.

"And touching the matters ordained in our previous proclamations, and our late ordinances, that, from the day on which they had acted contrary thereto, or had fallen into the said errors, they should be incapacitated to dispose of their effects; and that all alienations, gifts, seizins, sales, assignments, or transfers, testaments or wills, done or made by them, be void, and of no value, &c."

Also (page 168):—

Concerning the departure, or change of residence of the (so-called) Anabaptists; and what measures should be therein taken.

"Whereas, in many of our lands aforesaid, suspected of heresy, individuals of the sect of Anabaptists in particular change their places of abode, in order to infect simple people in countries where their wiles are not known: We, in order to provide therein, will, ordain, and establish, that no one of the inhabitants of our aforesaid Netherlands, of whatever state, quality, or condition he be, shall be harboured or received into any city or village of the said lands, in order to dwell there, except he bring a certificate from the ministers of the place of his last residence.

"Which certificate he shall be held bound to exhibit, and deliver over into the hands of the principal officer of the town or village in which he shall wish to dwell: on pain, that they who bring not such certificate shall not be permitted there to reside.

The officers are forbidden to afford any conveyance, or grant any safe conduct to such suspected persons.

"And we charge the officers, diligently to inform themselves of the same, and to proceed therein, as it behoves them to do; nor shall it be permitted to our officers abovementioned, nor to private lords and their officers, to grant to such persons any conveyance or safe conduct, &c."

Again (page 171):

Every one is commanded to bring up suspected persons before the clergy.

"That all those who shall know, or be acquainted with, any persons infected with heresy, shall be bound immediately, and without delay, to denounce, bring up, declare and give information of such, to all spiritual judges, bishops' officers, and others to whom it belongs. In like manner, if any one be found to have done contrary

to these our ordinances and prohibitions, showing himself to be infected with heresy, or an offender herein; or doing any act against our said ordinances and prohibitions, in particular tending to scandal, or sedition, &c.: that they who know or are acquainted with the same, shall be bound to apprise our procureurs, or their substitutes, or deputies, or the officers of the place where such infected offenders or criminals reside: and this upon pain of being punished at their pleasure.

As also to temporal governors, or their substitutes.

"In the same manner they shall be held bound, if they know the place where any such heretics harbour or lodge, to make the same known to the officer of the place; on pain of the aforementioned punishment, or otherwise be held as offenders, harbourers, and partizans of the heresy; and be punished with the same punishment as the heretic or criminal would be, if he were taken and imprisoned.

Likewise must their place of residence be reported; and that under heavy penalty.

"And in order that the aforesaid judges and officers, who shall have apprehended and seized the said heretics, Anabaptists, and transgressors of our said ordinances and prohibitions, may have no reason to dissemble with them, their accomplices and defenders, or to punish them less than they deserve under pretence that the penalties may appear too great and heavy; and appointed only to terrify the delinquents (that is the Anabaptists) and criminals, as has formerly been found repeatedly to have been the case:

The judges are forbidden to entertain any suspicion of the aforesaid punishment being too severe.

"It is our will that those who knowingly shall have acted contrary to this ordinance (by keeping by them, printing, selling, distributing, or publishing any heretical or scandalous books, writings, or otherwise, or have transgressed against the articles herebefore or hereafter declared, or any of them) shall be actually chastised and punished with the penalties above declared.

"Forbidding all our judges, justices, and officers, together with our vassals and subjects, temporal lords, ex-

The said judges are likewise forbidden to

moderate or lessen the appointed penalty or punishment against the so-named heretics.

ercising supreme jurisdiction, and their officers, to alter, moderate, or in any manner to change the prescribed penalty (that is, execution by the sword, by burying alive, or by fire); but that they, as soon as they have discovered such transgression, shall plainly declare and decree the prescribed penalties, according to these present ordinances, on pain of being severely punished; except it be, that in any matter, for any great and remarkable consideration, the aforesaid judges find a difficulty in the exact execution of the penalty appointed by our prescribed orders against the transgressor.

But, in case, in any respect, such modification or alleviation might be made, the same must be made known to the sovereign or provincial council.

"In which case, nevertheless, they shall not be at liberty, of themselves, to mitigate in the least degree the penalty; but shall be held bound to present or to send the criminal proceedings, securely closed and sealed, to the sovereign or provincial council, to whose jurisdiction they shall resort, to be there investigated, examined, and advised upon, whether any alteration or modification of the penalty may be made or not.

"And if the aforesaid persons of our council find, that in strict justice, according to right and reason (with which we charge their consciences) any modification or alteration may be made therein: in such case, they may give advice of the same, expressed in writing, and send the whole to the aforesaid judges and officers, in order thereby to conclude and terminate the said criminal proceedings.

Otherwise the judges themselves personally would be in danger of being arbitrarily punished. Oh, abominable tyranny of this emperor and this king!

"Commanding them to do nothing less, and ordering, most expressly and rigorously, under penalty of being chastised and punished at our pleasure, that they seek not the aforesaid consultation without great and remarkable reasons; but that they regulate themselves, as far as they are able, according to the purport of these present ordinances."[x]

[x] Extracted from the great book of Proclamations of Ghent, in which all the proclamations, mandates, and ordinances (of the emperor

[It was in October, of the year 1555, that Charles V. divested himself of his imperial authority. Spain and the Netherlands fell to the share of his son Philip. The edicts reviving the persecuting laws of 1550 were issued with much artifice, so as to give the inquisition a legal existence in the Netherlands which hitherto it had not enjoyed. As on the former occasion, the people of Antwerp, and of a few other great towns in Brabant, resisted the introduction of the inquisition, and that part of the king's edict was revoked. It was, however, promulgated in its entire form at Louvain and Bois le Duc, and led to great and very sanguinary persecution. "The monks of the cloisters were swollen with hellish joy. From the pulpit the cowled preachers did everything in their power to inflame the minds of the Catholics against the adherents of other communions. They crept into houses to discover the traces of heresy, and to precipitate its followers into ruin. No one was safe from the craft of these spies."] [y]

AUGUSTIN, THE BAKER.—ANNO 1556.

It happened, anno 1556 or thereabouts, that there was in Beverwyk, [z] a brother named Augustin, by trade a baker, who had forsaken the world, and confessing his faith, had been baptized, according to the appointment of [166]
Christ. This act was most obnoxious to the papists. The burgomaster, who was very hostile and filled with a false zeal, had said that he would give the turf and wood with

Charles V., and of the king, Philip II.) are collected, and cited by William I., Prince of Orange, in his Vindication, edition 1569, from page 135 to page 174 inclusive.

[y] [Ypeij en Dermout. Gesch. der Nederl. Herv. Kerk i. 165. Brandt, i. 107, 108.]

[z] [At Prinsen Bosch, near Beverwyk, the expedition of William III. to England was planned, which led to the Revolution of 1688.]

which to burn Augustin. The sheriff had promised not to apprehend Augustin, without first giving him warning, but he did not keep his word, for he came at a time when Augustin was at work kneading his dough. When Augustin saw him, he endeavoured to flee, but was immediately apprehended by his pursuers and led to prison. As he was a man much beloved, it grieved the sheriff's wife much; she said to her husband, "O thou murderer, what hast thou done!" But it was all in vain; like a sheep led to the slaughter, he had to follow the Lord Jesus. As he remained stedfast in his faith, they pronounced a cruel sentence upon him, namely, that he should be bound to a ladder, thrown into the flames, and burned alive.

On his way to the stake, he saw one of his acquaintances, to whom he said, "Adieu, Joost Cornelissen." Joost answered from kind feeling towards him, in a friendly manner, "I hope that hereafter we shall for ever be together." From a partial and prejudiced mind the burgomaster replied, "He will not go where you will, but will go from this fire into eternal flames." Augustin said to the burgomaster, "I summon you within three days to appear before the judgment-seat of God." Immediately after the execution the burgomaster was seized with a raving sickness, crying out continually, from an accusing conscience, "Turf and wood! turf and wood!" so that it was dreadful to hear him. Before the three days had expired he died; a striking evidence of the all-seeing eye of God, who will not permit such cruelty to go unpunished, and an example to all who, from perverse blindness, would commit such deeds. For it is frequently seen, that they who think to do God service, by tyrannical cruelty towards the pious, often come to a wretched end.

James ii.13. The apostle James says, that they *shall have judgment*

without mercy, who have showed no mercy. May the Lord enlighten those who are thus blinded.

FRANCES, GRIETGEN, AND MAEYKEN DOORNAERTS.—A.D. 1556.

At Belle, in Flanders, three women were likewise apprehended for the truth; namely, an old woman named Frances, a young woman named Grietgen a niece of Frances, with another young female called Maeyken Doornaerts; all of whom suffered many hardships and tortures. When they were about to torture the old woman, naked, she said to the gentlemen, "Remember that you were born of women, so do not put me to shame." She was therefore permitted to retain her chemise on the rack. They took great pains and trouble with the young woman Grietgen to draw her away from the faith, for she was still very young, but all in vain; for she greatly preferred the hope of everlasting joy to this brief period of pain and affliction, rather than purchase a speedily-perishing happiness at the price of never-ending suffering.

John xv. 27, Acts xii. 3.

1 Cor. xi. 11

Rom. viii. 18.

The other young woman, Maeyken Doornaerts, was also laid naked on the rack. Finding they could by no pain or torture make her renounce her faith, they began to ask her if she was not ashamed to lie there, naked and uncovered? To which she replied, "I did not lay myself here naked; but you, who for no crime put me to such grief and shame, will hereafter suffer for it everlasting dishonour." Although she was so tortured that her blood ran down the rack, she remained by the grace of God, who always strengthens his people, firm and constant in the faith. They were all three afterwards condemned to death, and burned in the fire. At the stake, Maeyken Doornaerts said, "This is the hour for which I have greatly

Heb. x. 38.

1 Thess. i. 6.

Matt. xxiv. 13.

1 Pet. iv. 18

longed, to put an end to all my troubles." Thus did these
John xvi. 33. three heroines piously wrestle through and suffer all this,
because they had on the profession of their faith been
Mark xvi. 16. baptized according to the instructions of Christ, and
further sought in the most perfect manner and in
Matt. iv. 10. righteousness, to serve and please the living God more
than mortal men; for which they await the joyful crown
1 Tim. iv. 8. of eternal and incorruptible life.

[167] [Two pious men, by name Abraham and John de Kudse, were this year also publicly put to death at Antwerp, after a courageous confession of their faith.]

CLAES DE PRAET,

FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, BURNT TO DEATH AT GHENT.—ANNO 1556.

"*The confession of Claes de Praet, while in prison at Ghent, where, for the word of the Lord, he laid down his life, a burnt offering to God.* 1556.

1 Cor. i. 3. "Grace and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all, my very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord.

Eph. i. 3. "*Blessed be the God and Father of Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without*
Eph. iv. 1. *blame before him in love.* Let each one of you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, that Satan
Heb. iii 13. may not trouble you in time of trial. Exhort one another with diligence and in love. I desired to write you an admonition, had I a favourable opportunity; I am kept very closely confined by the gaoler, he is very much afraid

of the dean; nevertheless I feel inclined to write you somewhat of my examination, and of the wickedness of the priests, and the feigned lies by which they sought to condemn me; but God be praised, who enabled me to keep the field. I write this that those who are still young may be edified thereby. 2 Cor. ii. 16.

"At first, after I was apprehended, I remained six days very sorrowful, oppressed, and heavy at heart; the flesh was very timorous. Against this, and many other things I had to wrestle; against wife, and children, and against Satan, who went about to devour me, making many marvellous assaults upon me, which it were too long to relate. On the sixth day, the gaoler came in the morning and called me out from the place in which I was confined, saying, "Claes, come down, follow me;" and he went before me. My heart kindled with joy to the Lord my God, so that all my distress and fear fled away like the dust of the street forcibly driven by the wind. I then thought, O gracious God, now I find that thou art faithful to thy promises; Lord, now guard my lips according to thy word. I was then led into a chamber, where were sitting the presiding magistrate and two other justices, the bailiff, and a man with a long beard, who had a great book in which to write. They looked earnestly at me as I entered the room. I saluted them with great reverence, and wished them unitedly peace. The gaoler placed a chair for me, and said, "Claes, sit down; it is so ordered." I seated myself with a cheerful mind, with my heart towards the Lord my God, wholly forgetting myself and the things of the world. They then said, "Be covered." I replied, "It is not at present becoming." The bailiff asked me, "What is your name?" I said, "Claes de Praet." He then said, "Write that, and a native of this city." Upon this the recorder asked me, "Were you born here?" I said, "I know nothing to the contrary." 1 Pet. v. 8. Heb. x. 23. Luke xxi. 14. Rom. xiii. 7. Col. iii. 1.

Bailiff. "Where were you, Claes, the last time when you were so long from home?"

Claes. "In Embderland."[a]

Bailiff. "What was your business there?"

Claes. "I was seeking for some article to buy or sell, or anything to do, by which I might gain a livelihood."

Bailiff. "Yes, and likewise to see the brethren; that I perceive plainly."

Claes. "Yes, Mr. Bailiff."

Bailiff. "Well, Claes, have you received any other baptism than that you received in your infancy, when you were christened?"

Claes. "I remember nothing of that, as I was so young."

Bailiff. "Have you received a baptism which you *do* remember?"

Claes. "Yes, Mr. Bailiff."

Bailiff. "How long is that since?"

Claes. "About four years."

At this they all seemed greatly surprised. The bailiff asked me again, "How long do you say?" One of the other justices said, "Nearly four years." The bailiff then looked hard at me, and asked who they were that were intimate with me, and who of my brethren were baptized. I said, "It is not our custom to ask each other, 'Whence are you?' or, 'Where do you live?' or, 'What is your name?' or, 'What is your trade?'

Bailiff. "You wish not to know."

Claes. "We do not, Mr. Bailiff."

Bailiff. "That is, in order that you may not involve any one."

Claes. "Just so, Mr. Bailiff; for we know well that men thirst for our blood, and the Lord has admonished us

Prov. i. 11.

[a] [In East Friesland.]

to be wise as serpents." The bailiff then looked crossly at me, and they spoke a deal to each other in Latin. Matt. x. 16.

The bailiff afterwards asked me, "Where were you baptized?" [168]

Claes. "At Antwerp."

Bailiff. "Where there?"

Claes. "Between St. George's-gate and the Cooper-gate."

Bailiff. "In what house?"

Claes. "In a small new house."

Bailiff. "What trade was carried on there?"

Claes. "I saw no business done there."

Bailiff. "Yes, Claes, who was present? there must have been witnesses present, who gave testimony that you were a brother."

Claes. "There were three or four persons present, who lived in the house, and one who conducted me in."

Bailiff. "Who was it that conducted you?"

Claes. "It was a young man."

Bailiff. "Where did he come from?"

Claes. "I did not ask him."

Bailiff. "How many were baptized with you?"

Claes. "There were three of us."

Bailiff. "Whence were they?"

Claes. "I did not ask them."

Bailiff. "What is their occupation?"

Claes. "One was a mason, I think."

Bailiff. "How did he who took you know where to find you?"

Claes. "He had appointed me a day in the Cooper-gate."

Bailiff. "How did you know that the baptizer was in town?"

Claes. "I had inquired, at different times, while attending to my business, and heard that he was there."

Bailiff. "Where did you hear that he was there?"

The presiding judge said, "They all know each other."

Bailiff. "Do they still live in the house in which you were baptized, or do you not know that?"

Claes. "Shortly afterwards they were driven out from that house."

Bailiff. "So you can tell nothing about them, can you?"

Claes. "One went to England, another was burned; of the rest I know not where they went."

Bailiff. "What man was it that baptized you?"

1 Tim. iii. 2. *Claes.* "I thought him a blameless person."

Bailiff. "Yes, Claes; how do you know whether the man that baptized you was blameless or not?"

One of the justices here observed, "He said that he thought him to be a blameless man." The president then said, "These people also preach, do they not?" The bailiff said to him, "We used to ask all that; but we do it no longer." They now rang the bell, that the gaoler might come and lead me away. All this they recorded. The scribe asked me what people of Ghent I had left at Embden. But I would not answer him, because it was not his business to inquire. The judges then said to me, "Claes, we will send you men who will teach you the true faith."

Claes. "I hope I have the true faith; if they will confirm me therein, I will welcome them; but if they wish to draw me aside from it, I desire not to see them." On which they said earnestly, "Claes, hear them, always hear them."

I then heartily thanked both the judges and the bailiff for the trouble they had taken with me: and the gaoler's man now directed me to go up. I went up, but felt very heavy-hearted that they had not asked me concerning my faith. Two officers who had been standing at the door to hear came up to me, and annoyed me with several things, saying, "Poor creature! for such things to lay

down your life, and leave your wife and children in distress: it is not right of you to violate your marriage vow, Gen. xx. 4.
for God has himself ordained it." I said, "I do not violate my marriage vow, nor wrong my wife: the fault is theirs who separate me from my wife; it is for them to take heed what they do." They said that I should speak so that they would hear me. I replied, "God has not taught Matt. x. 32.
me that:" and I admonished them to take care how they became guilty of innocent blood. As I resisted them, they went away, praying God to give me his best blessing. I then sat there alone, and Satan came to tempt me, pre- 1 Pet. v. 8.
senting this to my mind: "Poor creature! are you here for the truth's sake? the gentlemen make no inquiries about your faith, but concerning the baptism you received of such an one as you well know." He distressed me with everything he could, and did his best to cast me down. Then thought I: "O thou wicked tempter—thou John iv. 44.
murderer! I feel that thou art indeed the same that distressed Peter, and against whom he has warned us:" 1 Pet. v. 8.
and I fled to God, began a spiritual song, and sang with James v. 13.
joy. I was cheerful and glad that I had wrestled through this storm. I remained at that place about ten weeks.

After this the gaoler came, saying, "Claes, come this way; here are two winter crows [for food]," and straightly charged me to think of my wife and children. I said, "I think enough about them; but Christ has said, *He that forsakes not father and mother, sister and brother, wife,* Matt. x. 37.
child, yea his own life also for my name's sake, is not worthy of me." He said, "True: he that can do it." He then led me into an apartment, in which were two Jacobins.[b] These took their hoods off, and I took off my cap. They wished me good evening; I wished them the same. One

[b] [Dominican monks or preaching-friars. They obtained the designation of Jacobins from the name of their principal convent, St. Jacques, in Paris.]

of them asked me, "What is your name, my friend?" I said, "Claes." I inquired, "What is your name?" He answered, "Brother Peter de Backer;" and told me that he had been to the presiding judge who wished him to come and instruct me in the true faith. I said, "I have received that from God."

Qu. "What is your belief?"

Claes. "I believe alone in Christ Jesus, that he is the living and true Son of God, and that there is salvation in no other in heaven or earth."

Matt. xvi. 16.

[169.] *Qu.* "Is there nothing else to be believed? What becomes of our mother—the holy church—in which we must believe?"

Claes. "Do you really know which is the holy church?"

Qu. "If you know, let me hear it."

Claes. "I ask you, for you mentioned it."

Ans. "The same that it was from the time of Christ and the apostles, and which the apostles maintained and still uphold."

Claes. "Which is that?"

Ans. "Our mother—the holy Roman church."

Claes. "Is that the church of the apostles?"

Ans. "Yes."

Claes. "Did the apostles sustain her?"

Ans. "Yes, they did; just as we do, neither more nor less."

Claes. "Did the apostles celebrate mass?"

Ans. "Yes."

Claes. "Where is it recorded?"

Ans. "I will show you;" and he referred me to the Corinthians, where Paul speaks of the Lord's supper. I said, "Paul is speaking there of the breaking of the bread; but did he perform mass as you do?"

1 Cor. xi. 21.

Ans. "Yes he did, neither less nor more than we do."

Claes. "Did the apostles persecute, and maintain their church with fire and sword as you do?"

Ans. "Yes, they did; they shed blood, betrayed, and put to death."

Claes. "Peter shed Malchus' blood, and Judas betrayed; but whom did they put to death?" Matt. xxvi. 51.

Ans. "Peter slew Ananias and Sapphira with the sword of his mouth, so that they fell down dead;" and he laughed, and pointed his finger at me. Matt. xxvi. 24. Acts v. 5.

I then said, "Methinks you are of those of whom Paul speaks, 2 Tim. iii. 2, from whom we should flee; for your foolishness is not hidden, but is manifest before men. You sit, and jest, and trifle, and show plainly that you are persons of unsound mind, who are ever learning and never arrive at the truth;" and I reproved him sharply. They wished to say much and to question me concerning baptism, and the incarnation of Christ, and other articles of faith; but I had determined not to enter into a dispute with them, except in the presence of the justices, but only to make the same confession before them that I had before, as stated above. When they perceived that I would hear no more, and got up to go, one of them said: "Oh, Claes! you have miserably erred; yet I have so much regard for you that I could heartily wish you were of my mind, and that my body might be burned for you. Poor man, I will pray for you, and have prayer made for you when I preach."

Claes. "I do not wish you to pray for me, nor to have prayer made for me; for your prayer is vain, and will not be heard by God so long as you continue in your wickedness."

Ans. "There may, perhaps, be one or two amongst the whole that are good."

Claes. "Go your way, for you only want to talk."

He then went away laughing, and said: "I shall have

prayers said for you, whether you will or no; for you please me much, and I will come again."

About a fortnight after there came two of the same troop. One was a coarse fat man, very talkative; the other was very fierce and biting in his expressions. They wished much to engage me in disputation, but I refused, except by questioning them as I had done with the others, leading them to reveal their wickedness themselves. For many prisoners had come standing behind, under the chamber window, and at the door, in order to hear; of which I was well aware. I therefore asked the more questions. One was very loquacious, having drunk too much.

When I had remained in confinement about seven weeks, I was called down, and led into a chamber, where the dean of Ronse was sitting with his clerk, and another person. The dean told me to sit down. I sat down before the table near him, and he proceeded to give me a long sermon. I listened. He stated that it was impossible, without faith, to please God; and, said he, "He that believes not, is damned." At the end, he asked me, "Why have you suffered yourself to be led into such errors; why have you left the holy church?" I then said, "Because it is written, that without faith, it is impossible to please God; I have been diligent to seek for that faith, and have prayed to God that he would strengthen me therein, of his grace and mercy. He has done so abundantly, and I desire to preserve it faithfully to his praise, and not forsake it on account of any suffering, or aught that is in the world."

Heb. xi. 6.

Mark xvi. 16.

Matt. x. 2.

Dean. "You think that you possess the faith; but you have departed far from it. And as for your being so bold, and ready to die, that is from the devil, who can transform himself into an angel of light. When you read the scripture, you permitted yourself to be instructed by a

poor mean tradesman, who has taught you according to his fancy, and you are now deceived. You ought to have been taught by those who have the true doctrine, the ministers of holy church, who are your pastors or shepherds."

Claes. "Have they received the true doctrine?"

Dean. "Yes."

Claes. "Why then do they live a devilish life, as we see?"

Dean. "What does that concern you? It is written, Matt. xxiii. 3, 'Follow their precepts, and not their works.'"

Claes. "Are you then the scribes and Pharisees of whom Matthew writes?"

Dean. "Yes, we are."

Claes. "Then to you belong all the woes that follow in the same chapter."

Dean. "By no means."

We had much conversation about it. He would willingly have had me dispute upon the articles of faith; but I would not engage therein, otherwise than with such like questions. The man was candid in speaking, and very mild, and desirous of being heard; and he heard attentively himself. But I thought, "As I have heard so often and so much of this man, that he persecutes and oppresses the church, I must, now that I am speaking with him, know how he will defend it by the scripture;" for I did not remember ever to have seen him before. I asked him, therefore, where he found it written, that he should thirst and pursue after innocent blood; since there was no ground of complaint of any crime having been committed. Acts viii. 3. [170]

Dean. "My friend, I neither pursue, nor am I desirous of shedding, any man's blood."

Claes. "But you send your officers for that purpose."

Dean. "I do not, my friend."

Claes. "Do you then persecute no one?"

Dean. "No, my friend, not I."

Claes. "Do you not command it to be done?"

Dean. "No, my friend."

Claes. "But you have given my companions whom you had got into your power, and had remained steadfast in the faith, over to the law; this is known to all the world."

Matt. xxvii. 2.

Dean. "Not so, my friend."

Claes. "Why then do you come and sit with the justices, and speak so much if you have no concern in the matter? It seems to any one that now hears you, that you are not to blame in the business."

Dean. "I am not, my friend;" and he rubbed his hands together.

Claes. "Who does it, then?"

Dean. "The secular power, or the magistrate that has received the sword." We had much conversation upon it, so that he had no way of escape; he spoke from the scripture, Deut. xvii. 17, on which he founded the power of the priests. I said, "That was under the law of revenge, but now we are under the law of grace." I asked him how he dared to do what the Lord had forbidden; namely, concerning the tares, Matt. xiii. 30, so that men should let both the wheat and the tares grow up together? I asked, which of the two I was. I must, at any rate, be good wheat or tares."

Exod. xxi. 23.

Rom. vi. 14.

Dean. "You are of the tares."

Claes. "Why, then, do you not let me grow till the harvest?"

Dean. "The reason that the owner of the field so commanded his servants was, lest they should injure the wheat while plucking up the tares; but I can very well go along the borders of the field, and here and there pluck a

spike or two; yea, sometimes six or eight, even ten or twelve, sometimes a hundred or two, without injuring the wheat."

Claes. "Yes, if you are wiser than the servants of the householder."

Dean. "I can, however, do that very well."

Claes. "When I did like the priests, and walked in accordance with your views, was I then a good ear?"

Dean. "Yes, you were."

Claes. "Am I now, then, a bad one?"

Dean. "Yes."

Claes. "Now, if I am a bad spike, as you say, then you have injured me, and many more who have gone before me, with your weeding, which, you say, you can do so well. Ah, poor weeders that you are! When you gathered up the four spikes at the Verleplats, at Lier,[c] more than five years ago: when you stood on the scaffold and preached, and the people said, 'Antichrist is preaching:' at that time I began to examine for what faith the people so firmly died. I examined the scripture to which you referred, 1 Tim. iv. 3, and I found that I must separate from such people, as from the description there given you are plainly enough seen to be. I turned away from such a band, and do so still. Where are you now with your gathering, poor weeder? The more you pluck the more injury you do, according to your own words; it were better for you to be still; and I repeated to him many things from the scriptures, so that he was ashamed, and knew not what to reply. At last he said: "They were not my people, my friend; methinks you have well searched the scriptures; where did you worship?"

2 Tim. ii. 16.

Claes. "Where Christ and his apostles did; behind hedges, in the woods, in the field, on the mountain, on the

Luke vi. 17.

[c] [In the province of Antwerp.]

Matt. v. 1. Acts i. 13. sea-shore; sometimes in houses, or where places could be found."

John xviii. 20. *Dean.* "Christ preached in public, but we cannot tell where you are, who, or what you are."

Claes. "It may indeed vex you, that you cannot find nor know them, and that they know *you* so well. I hope that God will not permit you to find them; and, although you sometimes lop off the branches, I hope you will not be permitted to cut down the vine! Christ Jesus, the Son of John xv. 4. the living God, will safely keep his branches, and cherish Matt. xvi. 16 them that they bear fruit, notwithstanding you do your John x. 10. best to injure and destroy them." We talked much concerning the church and his own people; he spoke very highly of them. I proposed many questions as to whether young children were lost that had not been baptized? He said, "Yes, they are." I asked if the apostles had performed mass, and had persecuted; and to all he said, "Yes, they had." So that, I thought, the more questions I asked him, the more lies he told; I reproved him for the lies I found him in. He said, "They are not lies, but the truth; but you believe not; whatever is said to you, you remain obstinate and unbelieving, all the same." It seemed as if the lives of the apostles had been, in all respects, like the lives of the priests, neither less nor more, as he said. 1 Pet. i. 15. He further said: "As to your lives, you maintain a good walk and conversation with all men; you do good to your Matt. vii. 11. neighbour as you would have done to you, and live in Eph. iv. 5. peace with each other, in love and harmony, which is very good. You help each other in distress and trouble, and 1 John iii. 16. lay down your lives for each other, which likewise is very good, and against which I have nothing to say. You 1 Cor. v. 10. separate from your church those whose lives are unbecoming, as you did Jelis van Aken,[d] who led such a life, as I well know; to this I can say nothing, it is all well done;

[d] [See vol. i. p. 306.]

but what does it avail that you have the life while you have not the faith? that cannot save you." I said, "We have the faith, too, but you do not understand it, or will not; but, in the last day of the Lord, it will be revealed to you whom you have served," and I pressed him very [171] hard.

He rang the bell for the gaoler to let him out; the gaoler came in, and he rose up to go; I thanked him heartily that he had come here for my sake. He turned round and said: "I should rejoice to see you willing to be led into the right way, but you remain obstinate in your unbelief; you are like your master." I asked, "Who is my master?" he said, "The devil." I attacked him with many scriptures, that he might not come any more; he went away ashamed, for the gaoler was present, and several prisoners who had run to the door. I asked him for information about Jelis; he could tell me all about him, which surprised me greatly.

On the third day after this, I was once more fetched below by the gaolor; I went down very willingly. He directed me to go into a room. When I came in, I found the president sitting there, with another judge, and a pastor or priest, who was very searching in his examinations of our friends, and very bitter in his expressions, so that he could not hear a sentence without interrupting the speaker. But one of the judges had never been a member of the council before, and continually checked him; for he paid very strict attention to what was said. When I came into the room, I showed the gentlemen great reverence, and they me. I sat down down near the table, and the 1 Pet. iii. 17. priest made a long discourse, as the dean had done. I remained silent, until I was questioned. When he had finished his sermon he asked me, "Why have you so lamentably permitted yourself to be seduced from the faith into error."

Claes. "I have been led into no error; but out of error into the true Christian faith."

Priest. "What then is your faith? Let us hear it."

Matt. xvi. 16. Acts iv. 12. *Claes.* "I believe that Jesus Christ is the true and living Son of God, and that there is salvation in no other, in heaven or on earth."

President. "We all believe that in our church." The priest laughed, saying, "*That* I should also preach, tell us something else, and speak freely; for Christ said, *When ye are brought before kings, and princes, and governors, fear not what ye shall say; for in the same hour it shall be given you of my heavenly Father; yea, my Spirit shall speak by your mouth.* If then you have received the Holy Spirit, speak now by the Holy Ghost freely:" and the president sat, and continued to nod and simper, and said, "Yes, yes, Claes, yes;" before I could speak a word. The priest said immediately, "Christ promised his church that he would be with them to the end of the world. But of your people I find none that can tell me of any thing longer ago than about thirty years; for before that your church was not in being. Do you know any books that are older among your people? if you do, show them us."

Matt. x. 19.

Matt. xxviii. 20.

Claes. "Since Christ has promised his church to be with them to the end of the world, I therefore doubt not but he has preserved his body, and still does and will as long as the world shall stand, according to his promises. Matt. xxviii. 20; Eph. v. 23. And although at some periods, and in some countries, it has been extirpated by the sanguinary persecutions, and false doctrine of the Romish church, or in other ways: yet has it not been brought to nought throughout the whole world; for the world is large, and it may have lingered in some corners of the world, sometimes here, sometimes there, without having been brought to nought. As to your question concerning the books of our churches, the bible is our

book, and has been the rule of the church from early times."

Priest. "Is it large enough for you, and have you enough with one?"

Claes. "Yes, it is almost too large."

The priest laughed aud said, "What then has become of all the books, which learned men have written from the time of the apostles, who likewise received the Spirit of God as well as they; have they all written in vain? viz. Jerome, Gregory, Augustine, and Ambrose; they certainly were good, worthy men; were they not?"

Claes. "Are they the four pillars on which your church is founded?"

Priest. "Yes."

Claes. "I have known them only by report; they were but pious kitchen-maids, if they built up your church as she is now seen to be."

The priest hid his face, and said, "Aye, aye."

I said, "Christ did not found his church in that way; did Peter, Paul, Stephen, and John? they were treated to rods on their backs, stones on their heads, and the sword at their neck, and so forth." 2 Cor. xi. 26. Acts vii. 58. Acts xii. 2.

The priest was angry, and said, "Give us some correct information concerning your church, for we know not where to find her; if she were good, she would publicly appear. You have neither head nor government, nor do you know one another; that is a strange state of things."

Claes. "Paul, writing to the Ephesians, teaches us concerning the true church which Christ has presented to himself. It is glorious, holy, unblameable; without spot or wrinkle, baptized into one body and one spirit. Its head is Christ, and the members are his body, knit together. These have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father of us all, and through us all, and in us all. This is the true temple of God, in which God's Eph. v. 27. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. iv. 5.

1 Cor. vi. 19. Spirit dwells. This church Christ bought and redeemed
1 Cor. vi. 20. with his blood."

Priest. "Has not Christ redeemed all men: or these
1 Pet. i. 18. only?"

Claes. "It is written in various places, that unbelievers
Mark xvi. 16. shall be condemned. Of what benefit then will the blood of Christ be to them? or what shall it profit them that Christ has died? It is to be feared that they will lament that Christ died. But they who have believed
[172 the word of the Lord, and have followed it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God, and triumph with the Lord on mount Zion. These are they who have trodden death,
Rom. xvi. 20. the devil, hell, and the world under foot, though the world
John xv. 19. madly pursues to destroy them. If they were of the world, the world would love them; but because they are not of the world, therefore, as Christ hath said, the world hateth them."

Priest. "Your people do not believe that Christ is God and man."

Claes. "I believe that Christ is truly God and man."

Priest. "Do you believe that Christ was incarnate of the flesh of Mary?"

Claes. "No, I do not; for if he became incarnate of Mary's natural flesh and blood, he must have derived his origin from Mary; but it is written that he hath neither
Heb. vii. 3. *beginning of days, nor end of life.* The Word would not
John i. 14. have *become* flesh, if he had taken upon him the flesh of
2 John 7. Mary; neither would he be come *in* the flesh, according to the testimony of John, but of the flesh, if he had
1 John iv. 3. received it from Mary. It is written, *He that confesseth not that Christ is come in the flesh, is that spirit of antichrist*, and if he had been human of such flesh, he could not have ascended into heaven; for it is written, 1 Cor. xv. 50. that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven.*"

Priest. "But did not the angel Gabriel say to Mary, *Thou shalt conceive and bear a son?*" Luke i. 27. Isa. vii. 15.

Claes. True; but understand that word aright. He said, *Thou shalt conceive and bear:* that which Mary conceived could not originate from her."

Priest. "What Word became flesh?"

Claes. "That same Word, of which John bears witness in the first chapter, saying, *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life;* that life was manifested. What further answer would you have?" 1 John i. 1. John ix. 37. John xx. 27.

Priest. "Where did Christ take his flesh upon him, in heaven or on earth?"

Claes. "I will assert nothing that I cannot prove by scripture." [e]

Priest. "Do you believe nothing more than what is there written?"

Claes. "No."

Priest. "You believe, surely, that you have a soul, and what do you know about your soul? what it is? how large? how tall? how wide? or of what colour?"

Claes. "What does that concern me? my salvation does not depend on that."

Priest. "You believe that the dead shall arise unto life, and how can any one understand that what is destroyed shall rise and live again?"

Claes. "I am well satisfied with the answer that Paul has given 1 Cor. xv."

[e] [The opinions of the early baptists, as Menno and Dirk Phillips, on this important subject, are thus summed up by Cornelius van Huyzen: Zy zeggen dat Christus ligchaam van den Vader door de kragt des Heyligen Geestes, is toebereydt in het ligchaam van Maria, en dat hy als andere kinderen van haar gevoedt en geneerdt is en alzoo des vleesches en des bloedts deelagtig geworden. Historische Verhandeling, p. 81, Embden, 1712.]

Priest. "Do you not believe that Mary was both a virgin and a mother?"

Claes. "Yes, I do."

The priest struck his hand upon the table, and rose up in a passion, saying, "That you cannot prove; nothing of the kind is found in scripture."

Isa. vii. 15. *Claes.* "The prophet Esaias prophesied, that he should be born of a virgin. And when Gabriel said to Mary, Matt. i. 23. *Thou shalt conceive and bear a son;* Mary answered, *How* Luke i. 34. *shall this be, seeing I know not a man?*"

Priest. "Yes, you may here and there so take it; but did she continue a virgin till her death?"

Claes. "That I do not say."

Priest. "That is my opinion. What do you hold concerning the Lord's supper? When Christ took the bread Matt. xxvi. and brake it, saying, *Take, eat: this is my body;* do you not believe that he gave them his real flesh and blood?"

Claes. "No."

John vi. 53. *Priest.* "Did he not say, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you?* Did he not also say, that was the true bread of heaven, which came down from heaven?"

Claes. "Is the bread of which Christ speaks, John vi., that which you give the people to eat? that is to say, was it the same that you call the sacrament?"

Priest. "Yes, it is the same that he left us."

Claes. "Then none that eat thereof will be condemned, for Christ said, *If a man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.* All are included, whores, knaves, thieves, and Gal. v. 19. murderers: of whom it is written, that they shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven."

Ezek. xviii. 21. *Priest.* "But they repent of their sins before they receive it; and the Lord hath said, that when a sinner grieves for his crimes, he will remember them no more for ever."

Upon this we had much conversation, but it is too long to write. At last I asked the priest if he believed, when he took the host in his mouth, that he then receives the body of Christ, his flesh and blood, of the same dimensions as when he hung on the cross?

Priest. "Yes, I do."

Claes. "When you swallow him, whither does he then go?" The priest was quite angry at this. The president then asked me, "Why could you not be satisfied with your first baptism, without seeking a second baptism?"

Claes. "I know but of one baptism." Eph. iv. 1.

Priest. "Your godfathers and godmothers well know that you were once baptized, you can inquire of them."

Claes. "If I know well that I have been baptized, yet I now also know that it was without faith, and it is written, Rom. xiv. 24, *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*" Rom. xiv. 24.

President. "Your godfathers and godmothers were believers."

Claes. "I do not know that the apostles baptized any Acts ii. 38. person unless he himself believed and confessed his faith. What did I confess when I was baptized young?"

Priest. "Ask your sponsors that. What do you hold concerning our father the pope, and his kingdom?"

Claes. "The pope with all his retinue, the mass, and all belonging to it, are entirely worthless. It is neither corn [173] nor seed. You sell and deliver to the people masses by the dozen, by scores, and by thirties at a time; they have neither edge nor point; they neither cut nor pierce; yet you assure the people they are good and genuine. Is not that deception? You preach to the people that they should not drink themselves drunken; yet you yourselves Rom. ii. 21. go along the streets as stupified with drink as swine. You preach to the people that men should not be covetous; where is there more covetousness than amongst the priests and monks? You preach to the people that men should

Ecclus. xxxiii. 27. not be idle; where is there more idleness than amongst yourselves? You would rather go from door to door, with the bag or basket, begging, than work, as is evident."

The priest was enraged and stood up, saying, "That is the first thing that you teach each other, to publish the faults of your neighbours."

Claes. "Why should we not observe the marks that Matt. vii. 16. Christ has given us, saying, that men shall know the tree by its fruits?"

Priest. "That is to be understood spiritually;" and he left the room.

The president asked me if I would recant my second Mark x. 32. baptism and all I had said? I said, "No, indeed, gentlemen, I will by no means deny what has been done for me in the name of the Lord."

On hearing this the president stood up. They all rose and began to go out; I thanking them for their trouble. The president turned round and asked me once more if I would recant, or await my doom. My heart was moved to tell him and the other members of the council that they should consider what they did. I said, "Gentlemen, recant I will not, in anywise, and what will come upon me in pursuance of the emperor's mandate, I know well. But there are two mandates; one from the supreme majesty, and the other from the mortal emperor; and these two Matt. xiii. 30. stand in opposition to each other. The one says, that men shall let both grow together, the bad with the good; the other, that men shall pluck them up. I pray you, gentlemen, to warn the rest to consider which is best, for you Rom. xiii. 4. have not received the sword to punish the innocent." I said much to them, as the Lord gave me utterance. He stood with his cap in his hand, and the other likewise. The gaoler stood by and kept very silent. Finally they prayed God that he would grant me salvation, and went away.

I salute the whole church, dispersed in all lands, with

the peace of God, for I now expect from day to day to present my sacrifice. Pray God that he will keep me steadfast to the end. I pray for you daily. 1 Pet. i. 1.

Written in bonds.

GERRIT HASE-POOT.—ANNO 1556.

There lived in the city of Nymegen[f] a faithful brother named Gerrit Hase-poot, a tailor by trade, in the summer of the year 1556. After he had fled from the place in consequence of violent persecution, he returned privately for his wife and children, who continued to reside there. Rev. ii. 10.

He was, however, seen by the sheriff's guards, who gave information of it to their master. The sheriff, being a blood-thirsty man, went immediately in pursuit and apprehended him. This friend of Christ was thus separated from wife and children, and, for the name of Jesus, confined in prison in oppression and misery. When closely examined by the powers of this world, he boldly confessed his faith, and was not ashamed of the truth. He was therefore condemned to death, by being fastened to a stake and committed to the flames, which he with great courage endured. After his condemnation his wife came to the Town Hall to speak to him once more, to take her leave of him and to say adieu to her beloved husband, carrying a little child on her arm, which, from sorrow, she was scarcely able to support. When wine was presented to him (according to the custom of giving wine to those that were sentenced to death), he said to his wife, "I desire not this wine, but hope to drink new wine, and to receive it above in my Father's house." With great sorrow they were separated from each other, bidding each other [174] Prov. xxix. 10. John xv. 14. Matt. x. 37. Luke xiv. 26. Matt. x 32. Rom. i. 16. Prov. xxxi. 6. Matt. xxvi. 29.

[f] [A town on the left bank of the Waal, and a frontier fortress of Holland.]

adieu in this world (for the wife could not longer stand, but became faint from grief). He was then led to death. On being taken from the waggon to the scaffold, he
Matt. viii. 2. raised his voice, and sang the hymn; "Father of heaven,
Luke xvii. 5. on thee I call, O strengthen thou my faith." He then fell upon his knees and made his earnest prayer to God. When fastened to the stake, he threw the slippers from his feet, saying, "It were a pity to burn these, for they may be of service to some poor person." The strap, with which he was to be strangled coming loose, not having been properly fastened by the executioner, he again lifted up his voice and sang the rest of the above hymn:—

Farewell, ye saints, farewell;
What, if I meet this end?
Ere long the Lord shall come,
Our only leader, friend.
Joyous I wait the glorious day
With you to walk in white array.

The executioner having adjusted the cord, this witness
Rev. ii. 2. for Jesus fell asleep, and was then burnt. He freely sur-
Rev. xx. 4. rendered, for the truth's sake, the mortal body which he
1 Tim. iv. 7. had received from God, and having fought the fight, and finished his course, and kept the faith, there is laid up for him a crown of everlasting glory.

Respecting some persons who, under the government of the Count Palatine of the Rhine, were apprehended and banished the country.

Before the year 1557, various persons were thrown into prison and banished the country, who had been baptized according to the command of Christ. This took place under the government of the Count Palatine of the Rhine, as appears from the preface to the Frankenthal discussions.[g]

[g] Also in the Preface of the old Offerboek of 1616, letter Y. [The very rare book relating to the Frankenthal discussions, now before me, has the following title. Protocol. Das ist Alle Handlung des

From this it appears, that the baptist Christians had to suffer, at this time, not only from the Romanists, but also from those who had renounced the Roman Church and many of its superstitions; from which it may be seen what distress the church of God had then to endure. Nowhere was liberty of conscience to be found; the papists depriving them of life, and other people the liberty of divine worship.[h]

HANS BRAEL.[i]—ANNO 1557.

In the year 1557, a few days before Ascension Day, the brother Hans Brael was apprehended while on a journey in Pusterthal,[j] on account of his faith, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. About a mile from the castle,[k] he was met by the judge, who passed by and saluted him, for he did not know him. Hans Brael thanked him, but the court secretary rode up to him, and asked, "Where are you going, and what have you been doing here?" He answered that he had been with his brethren. The secretary asked if the dippers were his brethren? He answered, "Yes." He then took him into custody. The judge turned round, and dismounting took from the brother his own girdle, and bound him, making him run like a dog by the side of his horse, through the dirt and mud, for a full mile, until they came to the castle. He was so exhausted with running, and with being bound so

Acts xii. 3.

Matt. xxv. 40.

Gesprechs zu Frankenthal, &c.—Heidleberg im Jar 1571.]

[h] [A discussion was held at Pfedersheim, in 1557, after which it appears many baptists were imprisoned and exposed to persecution among the protestants. Protocol. p. 8.]

[i] [In the Manuscript "Cronikel, oder Denkbüechel," he is called Hans Kräl, fol. 83.]

[j] [In the Tyrol.]

[k] [From the above source we learn that this was the feudal fortress of Taufers. It is now partly in ruins, and partly inhabited.]

tightly, that he could scarcely stand, and fell down in the field; so that even the owner of the castle censured and reprimanded the judge for having bound him so hard. They then examined him, and after taking from him what he had led him to prison. The next day he was brought out, and was heard by the lord of the castle, who inquired of him concerning his faith, baptism, and the sacrament, and what he thought on these points. He then made confession of his faith, and of the truth of God; and having gone over the whole, they pressed him closely to recant. But when he plainly told them that it was useless to expect him to renounce the truth he had confessed, they brought him again into the prison. Eight days afterwards, he was again brought out, and was heard
[175] by his lordship and six others; but as they could effect nothing, he was remanded again to prison. After another week, he was once more brought before them, and heard in the presence of the whole council. The judge denounced his faith as a deception, and his church as a sect.
Acts xxiv. 14. Hans said, "It is neither a sect, nor a deception, but the
Eph. v. 25. church of God." The judge said, "It may be the devil's; how should it be the church of God?" He was very wroth, and said again, "Why should it be called a church of God?" But the brother Hans steadfastly affirmed that it was the church of God. The judge then said, "As this man knows who have come from the lordship of Inspruck, he must know where those people are who are sent out into this country, also their names; who has given them food, and harboured them; all this must we know." He
Matt. x. 5. replied, "We were not sent out to the injury or preju-
Acts ii. 38. dice of any one; the object of our mission is to seek the salvation of men, and to exhort them to repentance and reformation. What you inquire of me is no article of faith, nor any thing essential to be known; therefore I wish not to answer, nor to accuse any one." The judge

warned him to spare himself, for he would be severely dealt with, if he did not name the persons, and confess who had harboured them. Hans asked the judge and the whole council, whether, if he did so, if he were to betray and inform against those who had been kind to him, giving him food and lodging, he could be regarded as a Rom. xii. 13. good man. The council looked at each other, and said Matt. vii. 1. they could not consider such conduct as good, if done to themselves. But the judge was angry, and asked if he meant to accuse the honourable council of requiring him to act treacherously, and again admonished him to spare himself, or else they would deal with him very severely. But when they found he would confess nothing, they ordered him back to prison, to see what might follow a time of reflection.

Afterwards they had him again brought forth, and put to the torture. He took off his clothes and laid himself down before them, and patiently submitted to the cords of Rom. xii. 12. the rack, so that the eyes of the spectators were filled with tears, and they could not refrain from weeping. The executioner having suspended him, the judge admonished him to spare himself, and give the information required; but he said he would betray no one, he would resign himself to what God should permit them to do. They then bound a great stone to his feet. The judge became very wroth on finding that he could prevail nothing, and said, "You bind yourselves by oath that the one will not betray the other." Hans answered, "We do not swear, but we betray no one, because that were unrighteous." The judge then said, "Thou art a villain; I have caught thee in a lie. Why dost thou wish to become a martyr?" The brother said, "I am no villain, and wherein have you caught me in a lie?" The judge said, "You said that you were no teacher, but we find that you are." He answered, "I am not a teacher, and if

1 Tim. iii. 1. I were, I should not be ashamed of it; for it is an honourable calling in the sight of God." They then let him hang on the cord, and left him; but the executioner remained with him. In the meantime the council convened again. They entreated him to give the desired information, for they would not cease until every limb was dislocated. He answered, that he would resign himself to what God should permit them to do, for they would do nothing more than what God permitted them. The executioner said, "Are you not a fool to think that God looks here to see what we do in this hole? that were truly a ridiculous thing." The council afterwards came again, and said that the lady of the castle had forbidden him to be further tortured; they would therefore stop, but they ordered him again to prison. His lordship afterwards rode very joyfully to the ruling magistrates at Inspruck, and on his return, for two successive days, namely, on Saturday and Sunday, he sent the priests to deal with Hans, tempting him. His lordship was always present. But not being able with all their efforts to accomplish anything, and their false and deceitful speeches it were too long to relate, and as he remained steadfast, and still affirmed that it was the truth for which he contended, and in which he would continue firm by the protection and help of God, his lordship was at length enraged, and said, "O, you hardened dog! I have tried all possible means with you; let it be so; trust in thy desperate hope, and see how thy God will help thee in time of trial!" But he answered, "I shall not suffer for any unrighteousness, but for the faith and the truth only; God will not suffer injustice to go unpunished."

Matt. xxvii. 19.

1 Tim. iv. 1.

Matt. x. 22.

Heb. xiii. 6.

1 Pet. iv. 15.

After three days they led him into a deep, dark, filthy tower, where he could see neither sun, moon, nor daylight, so that he could not tell whether it was night or day; sometimes he could tell that it was night by its

Heb. xi. 35.

being colder than before. The dungeon was moist and damp, so that his clothes became foul and rotted on his body, and for some time he was obliged to sit naked. He had nothing but a coarse blanket that had been given him; this he threw round his body, and sat in misery and dark- [176]
ness. His shirt was so much rotted as not to leave a single slip of it, except the collar of the neck, which he hung on the wall. When these children of Pilate had him brought out to see if he would recant, the brightness of the light was so painful that he was glad when they let him go down again into the dark tower; there arose also such a filthy stench from the dirt of the dungeon that no person could remain with him; when they had brought him into it they were obliged to go out immediately, so that the gentlemen of the council themselves said that they had never encountered a stench so intolerable.

Thus he lay in this foul dungeon, where worms and vermin were his companions for a long time; he protected his head with an old hat, that from pity had been thrown to him; no one had been confined in this tower for some years, so that the vermin had greatly increased, and caused him much terror until he had got used to it. The worms frequently ate his food, so that when his meals were brought and left for him he was obliged at once to eat without setting them down, or the worms would so quickly have gathered upon the food that he could not eat it. When he had got a dish of pottage, and set it only once on the ground, they would devour it instantaneously; in short, he could keep neither bread nor aught else, for as soon as the worms smelt it they were immediately at it. It did not however so much matter, since he was often so hungry that he left very little over of his allowance; had his health been good he might have eaten it at once. The vermin, also, got into his water and were drowned, until

at length he found a great stone and placed it on the mouth of his pitcher.

In this severe trial his greatest affliction was that he could obtain no message from the church or the brethren. At this time there was in the upper country a certain Hans Mein, a servant of the Lord, who greatly desired to receive some information of him, and sent to him in the dungeon to contrive some sure token that it was well with
1 Cor. vi. 17. him, and that his heart still cleaved to God and his church. If he had nothing else, he should send a small tuft of straw, how small soever it might be. Hans could not collect enough in the tower, so deep was his misery and poverty. He recollected, however, the filthy collar which he had hung against the wall, and was glad, and sent it from the dungeon to his brother as a token that his faith in God was unchanged, and that he was in peace with the church. When this brother received the collar, and thus learned the misery and poverty of Hans, both he and his church heartily commiserated his situation; and after a sorrowful and bitter lamentation, they returned him a message that they would gladly send him some clothes, or anything else he might want, if it could possibly be conveyed to him; but Hans would not receive it, and for this reason, that if it were discovered, he should be again thrown upon the rack and tortured, in order that they might get other persons in their power. He therefore informed them that he would help himself with the garment of patience.

Thus he lay in this foul tower the whole summer, until nearly Michaelmas day in the harvest. When they saw that the frost began to set in, they brought him out from thence, and led him into another prison, which could not possibly be worse. There he was obliged to stay for thirty-seven weeks with one hand and one foot in the

stocks, so that he was unable to lie down or sit, and could only stand. He also suffered much mocking and ridicule from the ungodly, who said, "There lies a holy man; there is no one wiser than he; there he sits as a light of the world, and as a witness of God's people and church," and other contemptuous expressions. On the other hand, as he could not obtain any consolatory message from the church, it pleased God so to order it that he received comfort from unbelievers. One of the nobility once came to console him; he said he must be valiant and not be terrified, for he well knew that the truth was on his side, and that his faith was the true one; but that it was not possible to imitate him, or to suffer what he endured. Very earnestly did the brother address the noble in reply. It also came to pass that his zeal for God was inflamed, and he sent for the secretary that had apprehended him, wishing him to come to him in the prison. He very speedily came, sat down, and asked what he desired that he had sent for him there. The brother said, "The only reason is, that I cannot forbear showing you that, as you well know, you are the most guilty cause of my imprisonment and miserable sufferings, while never in my life I did you any injury." The secretary sat alarmed and silent, and said not a word, except that he had been obliged to do it. The brother said, "Yes, the judgment of God impelled you to do it, because you thirsted for the blood of the godly; it has therefore befallen you to have brought a heavy judgment upon yourself. God will assuredly visit you for it, demand it at your hands, and punish you for your sin." The secretary was silent and could say nothing, so alarmed and stupified was he. Thus he went away. In about fourteen days he died suddenly in the night; in one quarter of an hour was he well and dead. Great dread was upon him, so that he cried fearfully and moaned, lamenting that he had acted unrighteously and

Heb. xi. 36.

Matt. xxv. 36.

Luke xii. 4.

Jer. xxvi. 15.

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committed iniquity. So must it fare with them who will serve the devil and his fraternity. I forbear to say that he was besides greatly censured by his lordship, his master.

Rom. xiv. 17. In the same night in which this man died the brother

Matt. vii. 7. experienced great joy, so that he could not, by prayer and thanksgiving, sufficiently praise the Lord; for it occurred to him in the night that he should yet be restored to the brethren and the church. In the morning there came an officer, who told him that the secretary had that night

Psa. lxxiii. 9. suddenly and awfully died. The fate of the secretary produced great alarm in the mind of his lordship.

About a week afterwards one of the farm servants, a ploughman, came into the castle towards eventide, and having the keys, went to the brother, and asked him if he still hoped to obtain his liberty. He answered, "I shall wait to see what you will do with me." The ploughman tried to unlock the stocks, but could not find the right key. The brother said he must not do it, it might bring him into trouble. Not being able to find the right key, the man said that he would let him free, but not just then. The lady of the castle also sent a servant to the prison, who called to the brother and said, "Our kind lady sends you word that she will send the judge and the jury, and if you will only speak two words, promise to receive instruction and acknowledge that you have erred, you shall be set at liberty, and she will take upon herself the responsibility, so that no blame shall attach to you."

Mark i. 15. But he answered, "She has sin enough already to repent

1 Tim. v. 22. of; she need not have to bear the sins of others." Thus he had to pass another sorrowful winter in prison.

At length an order was issued by the council at Inspruck, which the magistrates brought to read to him. The contents were as follows:—That since he was so obdurate, and would receive no instruction, he should be sent to sea, to which he must go the following morning;

there he would find how the obstinate were stripped and flogged. But Hans answered that he would confide in the Lord his God, who was on the sea as well as on land, to help him and give him patience. He was then released from prison, and suffered to go about the castle for two days that he might learn again to walk. This he could not easily do, so very infirm had he become through lying in prison and in the stocks, fastened by locks and chains; for in this state he had lain two years within five weeks, and had for a year and a half never seen the sun. One of the officers was selected to take him to sea, to whose entire charge he was committed. He took leave of every one in the castle, exhorting them to repentance. The lady of the castle sent for him previous to his departure. She took him into her cabinet. He there took leave of her, and admonished her likewise to repent. He further entreated her to leave the godly to worship in peace, not to disturb them, nor cast any more pious persons into prison. To this she assented, and began to weep. The tears ran down her cheeks, as she said, "Never during my life shall another come into my hands." She presented him with money for his journey, and let him go.

2 Cor. i. 9. Mark xiv. 30. Luke xviii. Matt. iii. 2. Matt. iv. 17. John xi. 33. Jer. xl.

The servant then led him away; he was an ungodly man. During the whole journey he called the brother villain, or some other reproachful name.

Having journeyed for two days, this servant, in a tavern at Nidder-dorp, became so drunk with wine given him by the company present that, instead of going to bed to sleep, he stretched himself on the table. In his sleep he fell from the table; the brother seeing this opened the room door, then the door of the house, and shutting them after him, departed.

Judith xiii 15. Acts xii. 10.

Thus God on that night delivered him; it took place in the year 1559, and he came in peace and with joy to his brethren and the church of God. He travelled several

times in that country, after that he was called to the office of a minister of the divine word.[1]

From this we may learn how God supports and helps his people; how he can impart strength and patience in their sufferings, which otherwise were insupportable, to those who in uprightness of heart confide in him; we also see how he deals with enemies and gainsayers, and visits them. Not only did the secretary die a fearful death, as above narrated; during the time that this Hans Brael lay in prison the lord of the castle died suddenly; the servant also who was to bring Hans to the sea died miserably, before the brother left the country; and about two years after that the judge died, not an ordinary but a most wretched death.

2 Tim. iv. 17.
Phil. ii. 13.
Matt. xvii. 20.
2 Macc. ix. 5.
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JANNEKEN WALRAVEN.—1557.

On Whitsun-eve, in the year 1557, Janneken Walraven was burned alive at Antwerp in Brabant, for the faith and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. She was the mother of Jaques Walraven, a well-known minister of the word amongst the Baptists in Amsterdam; this his mother, although one of the weaker vessels, was not however weak in faith. Strong and steadfast she fought the good fight of faith, and obtained the victory through the grace

1 Pet. iii. 7
1 Tim. vi. 12.

[1] [In the year following his escape, this confessor was called by his brethren into the service of Christ as a teacher of the gospel. On the 5th of July, 1578, in an assembly of brethren at Neumühl, after much prayer to God for guidance, he was called to the pastoral oversight of the flock. His predecessor, Peter Walpot, had died on the 30th of the preceding month. On the 9th Nov. 1583, he was seized with sickness. He summoned to his dying couch, the elders of the church, also the members, addressing to them words of exhortation. On the 14th he fell asleep in Jesus, at Neumühl, in Moravia. For twenty-three years he had preached the gospel, and for six years exercised the pastoral office. His age at his decease was 63. M.S. Cronikel, fol. 87, 102, 107.]

of God, who never forsakes his people, but stands by them and goes with them into the water and the fire, lest they suffer injury to the detriment of their soul's salvation. Having, therefore, with her Bridegroom, overcome in suffering and death for his holy name, her immortal spirit is, with all the holy martyrs, under the altar, with patience awaiting at his return perfect redemption, when he shall appear in the clouds of heaven to unite soul and body; to glorify and make them like unto his own glorious body, and to rejoice with him throughout eternity.

1 Cor. xv. 57. Isa. xliii. 2. Matt. x. 28. Rev. vi. 9. John iii. 29. Phil. iii. 21.

JORIAEN SIMONS, AND CLEMENT DIRKS, WITH A FEMALE NAMED MARY JORIS.—ANNO 1557.

At this time three pious witnesses of the truth fell into the hands of the tyrants at Haarlem, in Holland; Joriaen Simons, Clement Dirks, and a female named Mary Joris. By God's grace these faithful servants endured, for the truth of Christ, close imprisonment and strict examinations; nor did they, in their great distress, hide in the earth, like the slothful servant, the talent they had received, but with diligence put it out to usury, so that, from the very gates of their prison, they proclaimed the word of the Lord for the reformation of all. Besides this they made known, by a poetical piece, the cause of their imprisonment; that they did not suffer as thieves and murderers, or as those who coveted the goods of others, but that it was alone for the belief of the truth and a pure conscience; and that, governed by the fear of the Lord, they could not, in opposition thereto, follow error. The principal articles of their faith they also gave as follows:—

Matt. xxv. 26. 1 Pet. iv. 15.

1. That with all true witnesses of God, they believe

and confess, from the holy scriptures, that Jesus Christ
John xvi. 28. the blessed was from heaven, and had proceeded from God his heavenly Father; he was therefore pure and holy,
Heb. ix. 11. not partaking of Adam's sinful and corruptible nature.

2. That they had been baptized on a confession of their
Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16 faith according to the command of Christ; they affirmed on the other hand that infant baptism was not from God, but was in opposition to his word; that from Christ's own words it is evident that children stand wholly in the grace
Matt. xix. 14, and Matt. xviii. 3. of God, and are in a state of salvation, without needing to receive baptism or any other rite from men. And therefore all that is thus done for the salvation of children is vain human presumption.

3. Concerning the supper of the Lord, they confess that they observed it according to his command and agree-
Matt. xxvi. 26. Mark xiv. 22. Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 27 ably to the institution of Christ, after his own usage and blessing when with his apostles; and that each one should examine himself before approaching to his table. That Christ did not celebrate his supper with drunkards and violaters of women, or with those who were known to be wicked, as is customary with the papists.

4. On the contrary, they firmly reject the small piece of baked bread, or consecrated host of the papists, which they give to the people as the true real Son of God, as able to impart grace and salvation in time of need; and they confess that all who worship such bread, or place
Matt. iv. 10. confidence therein, do grievously err.

5. They cannot acknowledge the pope and the Romish
Deut. vi. 13. 1 Sam. vii. 3. church to be the church of God, but oppose it with all its absurd ceremonies; nor do they regard the wares (with which it trades) to be of God.

6. In the church they acknowledge no other punishment of offenders than evangelic excommunication; there-
Matt. xviii. by to separate the bad from the good, that a pure church may be presented to the Lord, in which there may be

nothing impure or defiled, that is not banished from it. Eph. v. 17. This church they acknowledge to be the queen and bride 2 Cor. xi. 4. of Christ.

By these means, the fire of the gospel so spread in Haarlem, notwithstanding the tyrannical violence employed to crush it, that even in the night, when they abused them, an excellent and edifying address was fearlessly delivered in Schouts-street, by the pious Bouwen Lubberts.[m]

When the above-mentioned Joriaen and Clement were brought out to die, on the 26th April, 1557, they were greatly pitied by the common people; but they said, "Weep not for us; weep over your sins, and sincerely Luke xxiii. 28. repent." After they had made their prayer to God with fervent hearts, they were each fastened to a stake. They said, "We do not suffer as evil doers, but for obedience to 1 Pet. iv. 1. the truth alone." And thus, having commended their souls to God in steadfast confidence, they cheerfully and Acts vii. 5. piously stretched out their necks, and were first strangled and afterwards burnt. They abode to the end steadfast in Matt. xxiv. 13. the truth of the holy gospel which they had received—to the comfort and rejoicing of many of the godly.

After the tyrants had finished their strangling and burning, they sought their books to burn them, in order to extinguish the disciples: for it is related by the ancient

[m] [Leonard Bouwens was an eminent elder and leader of the baptists of this period. He died at Hoorn, in the year 1578. A very interesting list remains, probably in his own hand-writing, of the places in which he had baptized, and the number of persons that had obeyed the command of Christ. These places are situate in Friesland, Groningen, Overyssel, and other parts of Holland, and the numbers baptized exceed 10,000 persons. An adequate idea of the extent to which baptist sentiments prevailed, can only be attained by remembering that Menno Simons, Dirk Phillips, and others, were equally active in Holland and Flanders. Ten Cate's Gesch. der Doops. Friesland, i. 87, 89. Gesch. der Doops. Groningen, p. 51. Gesch. der Doops. Holland, i. 24.]

historians, that Joriaen Symons went about selling books. But when it was observed that the books began to blaze, such a tumult arose among the people, that the magistrates hastily departed. The people then threw the books amongst the crowd, who most eagerly caught them. Thus, through the providence of God, instead of the truth being extinguished, as was intended, it was the more spread abroad by the reading of so great a number of these books.

Mary Joris remained, likewise, faithful in this trial, and piously confessed her faith before the magistrates. She was also ready to resign her life, with her brethren, for the name of the Lord; but, as she was pregnant, she had to await her confinement. The will of the Lord, was however, otherwise; for her delivery cost her her life. Thus released from the body, the tyrants were not permitted to satisfy their malice against her. With her brethren, she fell asleep in the Lord.

Rev. ii. 10.

Whoever is so disposed, may read this history in the old Hymn Book, both as given by this witness herself in her imprisonment, and as composed in verse by the pious Bouwen Lubberts.[n]

A Testament which Joriaen Simons left his son Simon, while lying a prisoner in Haarlem, for the word of the Lord, and afterwards put to death in the year 1557, *the* 26*th April.*[o]

May God of his great mercy cause my son Simon to grow up in virtue, and, if the Lord permit him to come to years of understanding, to confess him; and having

[n] [This rare book is entitled Een Liedtboecken, Trackteerende vân het Offer des Heeren. Tot Harlinghen int jaer ons Heeren, 1599. The historical poem referred to above is found at fol. 39, b.]

[o] [Het Offer des Heeren, fol. 116.]

known his will, to order his life agreeably thereto, that he may obtain eternal salvation through his beloved Son Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost. Amen.

My child and dear son, bend your ear to your father's admonition, and listen to my relation, how, and in what manner, he began and ended his life. [180] Prov. iv. 1.

Unprofitable, proud, puffed up, drunken, selfish, faithless, full of all idolatry, was the beginning of my life. When I had arrived at years of maturity, and became my own master, I sought only what pleased my flesh; and lived an idle delicate life. I was covetous of shameful gain. I sought to bring my neighbour's daughter to shame, as appears, alas! from the act itself; and what I did in secret is shameful to be told. I was a vessel full of impiety. But, my dear child, when I gave myself to the reading of scripture, and searched and read it through, I found that my life tended to everlasting death, that everlasting woe hung over my head, and the lake of hell, which burns with sulphur and pitch, was prepared for me. This was approaching me, according to Paul's words, for he says, *They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Gal. v. 19. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Eph. v. 12. John v. 39. Rev. xii. 8. Gal. v. 19.

Taking these things to heart, I began to be greatly alarmed and afraid. I took the word of God to be my counsellor. I considered which would be the best, to live here, for a short time, a licentious life, and expect the everlasting torment of hell, or to suffer here, a little misery (if, indeed, it may be called misery), and hereafter enter everlasting joy. I found in the scripture, *What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* and that he had nothing by which he might redeem it. Therefore, my beloved son, I esteemed it better, like Moses, to suffer for a short time affliction with the people of God, than to live in sinful pleasure in the world which must shortly perish. I therefore renounced my ease Psa. cxix. 24. Matt. xvi. 26. Heb. xi. 25.

voluntarily, and without constraint, and turned into the narrow way to follow Christ, my head, well knowing, that if I followed him to the end I should not walk in darkness. When I had in measure renounced and rejected the old man, and desired to be a new creature after God, and to live a pious godly life, I was immediately (as were all the godly before me) hated, and led to prison in St. John's Gate, Haarlem.

Matt. vii. 13.
John viii. 12.
Isa. lix. 15.

This, my beloved son, was my life until that time when the Lord enlightened me. In the first place, my dear child, I wish you heartily to be admonished and entreated to avoid and eschew all wickedness, and walk in the fear of the Lord (which is the beginning of wisdom) from your very childhood. And if God reveal his truth to you, that you will not delay to walk therein; for death pursues the young as well as the old. Employ well the time which is granted you of God for your improvement. Let your intercourse be with the good; be aware of the perverse; when sinners entice you consent not, and do not associate with them; turn away your feet from their paths; their steps lead to destruction. Thus, touch not the pitch, that you be not thereby defiled; for to the wicked an evil end is near, which is a burden they all shall bear. Against this, and against all evil, be on your guard, my dear son. Take heed, and think of what Paul says, that *we must all stand at the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* The flesh will counsel you nothing good. Therefore Paul may well say, *To be carnally minded is death;* yea, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Therefore crucify your fleshly members here on earth. Read Paul, or hear him read; he will correctly tell you what are the works of the flesh. If you have time and opportunity, use your efforts and diligence to learn to read and write, that you may the better learn and know what the Lord requires of you.

Psa. cxi. 10.
Ecclus. xiv. 15.
Ecclus. ix. 16.
Prov. i. 10.
Ecclus. xiii. 1.
2 Cor. v. 10.
Rom. viii. 6.
Gal. v. 19.

My beloved son, my heart's desire and prayer to the Lord for you is, that your soul may be protected from the flood of God's wrath that shall overtake all the ungodly who have not sought after God, nor walked in his commandments. This approaching wrath you cannot escape better than by looking to Jesus Christ, the Son of the Almighty and everlasting Father, who is the head and Eph. i. 22.
example of all that believe, yea, the author of faith and Heb. xii. 2.
its finisher, that is, Jesus Christ. Inquire of him for counsel, what is, above all, the best for you to do; he will teach you; knock at the door of the holy Trinity; beseech Matt. vii 7.
him and he will open to you, and give you that which is needful for you. Hunger and thirst for the truth, and you Matt. v. 6.
shall be filled. Do not seek for great temporal things, although they who obtain them are thought by people in general to be blessed and honoured; yet are they unblessed and rejected by God; therefore, humble yourself under the 1 Pet. v. 6.
mighty hand of God, that in eternity you may rejoice.

Consider how it was with Him and with all the godly Luke ii. 7.
before him, and likewise since; his birth was poor and miserable; he was obliged immediately to flee from Herod, Matt. ii. 13.
for he sought his life. He had not in his sufferings where Matt. viii. 20.
to lay his head; and for all his great and glorious benefits, [181]
he had for thanks to be called deceiver, wine-bibber, Matt. xi. 19.
Samaritan, and one possessed by the devil. Besides John viii. 48.
this they attempted to stone him; all this continued until John viii. 59.
the time being fulfilled they condemned him to the most shameful death.

Before the giving of the law the pious Abel had to suffer Gen. iv. 8.
from his brother Cain, who slew him from mere hatred and envy, because his brother's works were good and acceptable to God, and his own wicked and rejected. All the excellent Matt. v. 12.
prophets who lived according to the word of God and maintained it, without any respect of persons, had to suffer much. Micaiah, in the time of Ahab the king, the only 1 Kings xxii. 14.

one found faithful amongst four hundred false prophets, was beaten by Zedekiah, and afterwards thrown into a dungeon. Elijah, among four hundred and fifty false priests of Jezebel, the only faithful one, was also called to suffer much; so that Paul might well say, for he had himself experienced it, that *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.*

1 Kings xviii. 19.

2 Tim. iii. 12.

This, all other godly witnesses of God have also experienced, but they remained stedfast to the end; wherefore, as the Scripture speaks, the crown is prepared for them; for the mouth of Christ himself testifies that, *whosoever endureth to the end shall be saved; he that overcomes shall inherit all things; shall be clothed with white garments, and shall eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

James i. 12. Matt. xxiv. 13. Rev. xxi. 7. Rev. ii. 7.

Consider this, my beloved son, meditate herein day and night; namely, to die to the world and to fulfil the will of Christ. In the first place, and above all, guard against all false prophets, hypocrites, and dissembled saints, who, in my time, were the priests and monks, and will not, I fear, be wanting in yours, as long as rich dainties follow them. Believe them not, for they are deceivers of men and murderers of souls. My son, he who writes you this has known it well by experience and examination; he has himself drunk of the cup. Neither live among any sect, of which, in my time there were many, as Lutherans, Zwinglians, and others; all of whom have indeed the appearance of being good, yet in reality are bad and a deadly poison. Look after a small band, whose entire rule of life agrees with the commands of God, and whose ordinances or sacraments are conformable to the command of Christ and the usage of the apostles; that is the true church of Christ, without spot or blemish; flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. They have likewise teachers, according to the instruction of Paul, unblameable in all things, having

Psa. i. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 13. Luke xx. 31. Eph. v. 27. 1 Tim. iii. 2.

obedient children and believing wives, who know nothing of law-suits or pleadings; of curses or oaths; of any hatred or envy; of any lying or deception; of any uncleanness or adultery. With such all is love, peace, unity, and truth, as Paul will teach you, and these are the fruits of the Spirit. Gal. v. 22.

My dear son and beloved child, this is my greatest desire, and last will, my testament to you; this I desire of you, that you will diligently peruse and digest it well, and let it accompany the scriptures, that your ways may be ordered agreeably thereto. Observe well, my son, what I write. Many will be seen having the appearance of good teachers, saying that they have medicine for your sick soul; but those with whom you find profit are they who have the truth, with these abide. Water and fire are set before your eyes; you may stretch out your hand to which of them you please, it is death or life. This, my dear son, will at first be very hard for you to hear, for your first birth is contrary thereto, being of the flesh; but you must be born anew, and be converted, if you will enter into the kingdom of God. This you cannot understand, as long as you are carnally minded; yea, as long as you are not esteemed of the world a fool and an enemy. Eccius. xv. 16. John iii. 6. Matt. xviii. 3. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 15.

My dearly beloved son, my prayer is at last, as at first, that you will think on this and conform yourself to it. From a faithful parental heart, I leave you this, being about to depart from this world, and suffer death for the word of the Lord. The Lord grant you, and all who read it, or hear it read, that they may take it to heart, act accordingly, and become eternally blessed.

My son's testament.—Written in the year 1557, the first Monday in April. On the 26th day of the month, it was confirmed by death.[p]

[p] [Van Braght also gives three other admonitory epistles addressed to his Christian friends, from which we learn that he was at least sub-

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ALGERIUS,

A STUDENT OF PADUA, MISERABLY BURNED AT ROME, ANNO 1557.

A consolatory Epistle of the youth named Algerius, who, for the testimony of Jesus, was immolated in the city of Rome, in the year of our Lord 1557.[q]

In this epistle we have found such wisdom, sanctity, and excellence, that we have read it numberless times with attention andemotion. Our love to God has thereby been inflamed, as also our zeal, not only to live with Christ, but likewise (if needs be) to die with him, and for his holy truth. Oh! were we worthy thereof, that his holy name through us (unworthy) might be praised!

To the beloved brethren and fellow servants of Jesus Christ who have come out of Babylon unto Mount Zion, whose names, not without cause, I conceal: grace, peace, and mercy be with you from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

In order to alleviate, or partly to remove, the anguish which you suffer on my account, I have desired to make you partakers of the joy I experience, that you may be glad with me, and in the presence of the Lord may rejoice with thanksgiving.

I will relate an incredible thing: that I have found infinite sweetness in the lion's bowels. Who will believe that which I shall relate? who can believe it? In a dark hole I have found cheerfulness; in a place of bitterness and death, rest and hope of salvation; in the abyss or depth of hell, joy. Where others weep, I have found laughter; where others fear, there have I found strength. Who will ever believe, that in a state of misery, I have had great pleasure; that in a lonely corner, I have had glorious company; and in the hardest bonds, perfect repose? All these things (ye, my companions in Jesus Christ), the bountiful hand of God has granted me. Behold! he who at first stood far from me, is now with me; and him

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jected to two severe examinations before his sentence was pronounced. The form of the sentence is similar to that given in previous cases.]

[q] [Ottius places this martyrdom in the year 1556. Annales Anab. p. 128. Twisck gives it under the year 1557. Chronijck van der Ondergangh, &c., ii. 1178.]

whom I imperfectly knew, I now see clearly; him whom I formerly saw afar off, I now contemplate as present. He for whom I longed, now stretches forth his hand; he comforts me; he fills me with joy; he drives bitterness from me, and renews my strength and consolation; he gives me health; he supports me; he helps me up; he makes me strong. Oh! how good the Lord is, who suffers not his servants to be tempted beyond their ability. Oh! how light, pleasant, and sweet is his yoke! Is any like unto God most high; who supports and refreshes the tempted; who heals the stricken and wounded, and restores them altogether? None is like unto him. Learn, my most beloved brethren, how gracious the Lord is; how faithful and compassionate is he who visits his servants in their trials; he who humbles himself, and condescends to stand by us in our huts and mean abodes. He grants us a cheerful mind, and a peaceful heart.

2 Cor. i. 4.

Matt. xi. 30.

Isa. xli.

Isa xliii. 10.

Isa. xliii. 2.

Will the blind world believe these things? No! But because they are unbelievers, they will rather say, You will not long endure the heat, the cold, and the hardship of the place; how then will you be able to bear the cross, the thousand-fold contempt, injustice, reproaches, and infamies that await you? Have you no regard for your dear native land; the riches of this world; your parents; the rank and honour of courts? Can you banish from your mind those noble and inspiring arts which cost you so much labour? Will you lose so much for just nothing? the fruit of your many watchings, of so much toil, and industry? To what purpose have you attempted and endured so much, from your youth up? Have you no fear of death, which, though innocent, awaits you? Oh! what a foolish and ignorant thing it is, to be able, and yet unwilling, by a single word, to avoid all this and escape from death! Oh! what folly, when you can obtain so many privileges from such an honourable, just, wise,

Matt. iv. 8.

That is knighthood or nobility at Venice.

and pious council, and from illustrious men, that you wilfully refuse to receive them.

But hear now, ye blind and dying men! what is hotter and fiercer than that fire which is prepared for you? what is colder than your own heart, which is still in
John i. 5. darkness, and has no light at all? what is harder, more disorderly, and more restless, than your life? what is more ignoble and hateful, than your own age? Ye wor-
2 Cor. v. 1. thies! tell me what country or home is more pleasant than heaven? what treasure is greater than eternal life? Who
John xx. 31. are our parents or friends, but they who keep the word of
Luke xi. 28. God? Where is greater joy, riches, and more exalted
Matt. xxv. 21. honour than in heaven? Tell me, ye ignorant ones, are not the arts given to impart the knowledge of God? if
Rom. i. 25. we discern him not in truth, doubtless all our trouble, watchings, and toil, yea, all our efforts, will have been expended in vain, and to our loss. Answer me, ye un-
Exod. xv. 26. happy men, what comfort or remedy can he have who is without God—the repose and the refreshment of all? How can he say that I fear death, while he is himself dead
1 Tim. v. 6. in sin, and thus esteems death more precious than life?
John xiv. 6. For if Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, can men find that life out of Christ? Heat is to me a refreshing delight; winter a time of rejoicing in the Lord. Should
Matt. x. 28. I, who fear not the burning of the fire, be afraid of a little heat? Can he be tortured by icy cold who consumes, melts, and falls asleep in the love of God?

True, the guilty and evil doers cannot abide this place; but to the innocent and righteous it is very pleasant and sweet; honey comes therefrom; thence flows heavenly drink; there milk bubbles up and issues forth; thence springs up an abundance of every good thing. The place is, indeed, esteemed solitary and base, yet is it to me an extensive dale, and one of the most honourable places in the world.

Tell me, ye miserable men, if now I could have a pasture or land more delightful than this. Here I see kings, princes, states, and nations; I see war and strife; some are hewn in pieces, others appear as conquerors; some have fallen into misery, others have climbed the pinnacles of honour. Here is mount Zion. Here I rise and ascend to heaven. Jesus Christ stands before me. Patriarchs, prophets, evangelists, apostles, and all the servants of God encircle me. He, the Lord, folds me in his arms, and supports me. These admonish me, those show me the holy things; these comfort me, others conduct me with shouts and songs.

Shall I then say that I am alone amongst so many? for [187] I have companions to console me, and examples to imitate. Here I see some crucified, others beheaded; some stoned, others hewn to pieces; some roasted, others baked in pans, in ovens, or cast into caldrons of oil: one has his eyes thrust out, another his tongue torn out; some are flayed alive, others have their hands and feet cut off; some are thrown into burning furnaces, others given to the beasts for food; but time would fail me to relate the whole.

Heb. xi. Of these, in Eusebius and in other places.

2 Esdras viii.

Lastly, I see others who suffered many kinds of torture and martyrdom, and all that they might now live and be no more sick. One only remedy and Physician is there for them all, who can heal all their infirmities. He gives me strength and life, and makes me cheerful to suffer all this anguish and sorrow, which is only momentary, and not worth mention. That is the hope which I have placed in heaven. I fear not those who unrighteously reproach and persecute me; forasmuch as He who lives in heaven healing *these*, shall mark and chastise *them*. I will not be afraid of thousands of people who stand around me; for the Lord my God will at all times deliver me. He is my protector and defender; he is my comfort; he is my head; he will defeat them who, without cause, set themselves against

Heb. xiii. 6.

me; he will break the jaws of the wicked; for salvation and blessing, the power, and the kingdom, are his. The
1 Pet. iv. 14. reproach which we suffer for Christ's sake, brings us nothing but pure gladness and joy. For thus it is written, *If ye be reproached* and slandered *for the name of Christ, happy are ye;* for that is the honour, glory, and power of God, and his Spirit shall rest upon you. If then we are assured of our salvation, we shall esteem as nothing the rude reproaches of those who contemn us.

2 Cor. v. 1. On earth I have no abiding city or place of rest; my
Heb. xi. 14. home and country is heaven. I seek the new city, Jeru-
Rev. xxi. 2. salem, which I see before me, which approaches to me. See, I am already on the road; there my happy home is found. My riches, my parents and my friends, my pleasure and my glory, all are there. I doubt not but I shall be with them. All earthly things are but shadows; they are all perishable; vanity of vanities to those who miss the hope and possession of eternal life.

The arts or gifts which God bestowed upon me were at first delightful amusements and recreations to me; they now yield me holy fruits. I have (it is true) toiled, suffered cold, watched day and night, as far as it was in my power; but this labour has only served to perfect me. I suffered no day nor hour to pass without a line. Behold, the faithful countenance of God has unveiled
1 Pet. i. 8. itself upon my life; and the Lord has given my heart great joy. In him alone I rest in peace.

Who will now dare to say that I have lost my years and my life? Who will say that I have lost my courage?
Lament. iii. 24. For my soul has said, *The Lord is my portion: therefore will I hope in him.* Wherefore, since dying in the Lord is no dying, but only leads to a blessed life: wherefore doth an enemy of God seek to hinder me from dying? All this will be to me the highest joy, if I may but taste of the cup of the Lord. What more certain pledge of my

salvation could happen to me? Did he not say that men will do to you, even as they have done to me? Let the foolish man henceforth be silent, who has long erred in the light of the meridian sun. Let the blind world cease to imagine such things; for I will say with the apostle: Neither distress, nor anguish, nor hunger, nor nakedness, nor anxiety, nor persecution, nor sword, shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ. We are killed all the day long, we are led as sheep to the slaughter; but we are thus sharers with Christ, who hath said, that *the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord.* He hath also left it on record, that each one must take up his cross and follow him.

John xv. 20. Rom. viii. 39. Ps. xliv. 22. Matt. x. 24. Matt. x. 38.

Comfort yourselves, ye dearly beloved fellow servants of God, comfort yourselves; for we endure manifold temptations. Let our patience, in all situations and in all places, be made perfect, since these things are spoken and promised us here on earth; for it is written, that they who kill us will think that they do a holy work, and make an offering to God. Therefore fear and death are but parts and parcels of our lot, which make known to us our calling; while we rejoice in the life to come, and triumph in the Lord, though smitten down without fault and given over to death. *For it is better, if the will of God be so, to suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.* An example is set before us in Christ, and in the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, whom the children of unrighteousness have killed, according to their usage and wont. Behold! what shall we do? Blessed are they who remain steadfast. We rejoice in our inno- [188] cence, and in the righteousness bestowed upon us by the Lord. God will punish them who persecute us.

2 Cor. xiii. 11. John xvi. 2. Phil iv. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 17. Matt. xxiii. 33.

I have been accused as a fool, inasmuch as I hide not the knowledge of God, and seek not to conceal, but to declare it both in private and in public; which I could

answer by a single word, O, thou poor creature! what art thou, who beholdest not the sun? thou who thinkest not of the words of God?

Matt. v. 14. My beloved, remember the saying of Christ; *Ye are the light of the world;* also, *a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hidden. Men do not light a candle, and set it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that* Matt. x. 18. *are in the house.* And in another place he saith; *Ye shall* Matt. x. 28. 2. *be brought before governors and kings,* and others. Therefore, *fear not them that kill the body; but rather fear Him who can kill the soul. Therefore, whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven.*

Since, then, the Lord hath spoken so plainly, by what authority do they act who counsel and desire to persuade me? For I will never forsake the counsel of God to follow the counsel of men, since it is written, that he is Ps. i. 1. *blessed who walketh not in the way of the ungodly, nor standeth in the counsel of the unrighteous, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

John xii. 13. Never will I deny Christ, but as often as it is needful I will confess him; I will not esteem my life more than my soul; I will not exchange the future life for the present. Wisd. v. 3. Oh! how little does he know, who thinks that we are in the way of folly. This I regard it not as unbecoming, although I please not the most mighty, most righteous, most wise, most merciful, most excellent, most illustrious senators of this place; whose favour is promised me, if I recant.

These words we have changed somewhat accord'ng to the style of the old copy. This is the title of the nobility at Venice.

But inasmuch as we are instructed by the apostles of the Lord, that we must obey God rather than men, this is, therefore, the reason that I accept not this favour from them. I wish that they were more perfect in the presence of the Lord. They are indeed here, most mighty; but they should make themselves perfect in the Lord.

They are indeed righteous; but they fail of Christ, who is the ground of righteousness. They are wise; but Ecclus i. 16. where the beginning of wisdom is, there is also the fear of God. They are called merciful; but I wish they were more resigned (or more subject) to Christian love. They are gracious; but I wish them the foundation of goodness, namely, the best and most high God. They are called illustrious; but they have not received our Saviour, Rom. xiii. 14. the most illustrious One.

Perceive ye, and mark well, O ye kings and judges of Matt. i. 21. the earth; be ye instructed; serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Receive instruction, lest the Wisd. vi. 2. Lord be wroth, and ye perish from the right way. Why Acts iv. 26. do ye rage, O ye people and heathen? Why do ye imagine vain things against the Lord, ye kings of the earth and ye rulers? Why have ye set yourselves together against Christ, the holy one of God? How long will ye seek lies, and hate the truth? Turn ye, turn ye to the Lord our God, and be not hardened in your hearts, for you must admit that they who persecute the servants of God, persecute God himself; for he has said, that what Zech. ii. 8. men shall do unto you, that is done to myself and not to you.

Let men do as they will, shall the word of the Lord be [189] brought to nought? Shall the gospel no more avail? Nay, assuredly; for the kingdom of God shall be only so Gal. vi. 18. much the more acceptable to the true Israelites, and come the sooner to the chosen of God. And they who do such things will experience the judgment of God. They who 2 Thess. i. 6. slay the righteous will not go unpunished.

Most beloved, lift up your eyes, and receive in your hearts the counsel of God. A short time since, the Lord gave you a sign by pestilence, for your amendment; but if men will not regard it he will unsheath his sword, and Psa. vii. 12. strike with pestilence and with hunger the people that lift

Acts xii 3. Acts xxi. 33. up their horn against Christ. Which scourge may God of his mercy turn away from this place.

To D——, the most fervent amongst the faithful, from the imprisoned and fettered Algerius, from the most delightful pleasure garden, the prison, called Leonia, the 12th of July, 1557.*

* The date of the year was by some stated to be 1555, but is a mistake.

How Algerius was sacrificed.

Some of the ancient writers were not aware that this youth Algerius had applied to the Baptist church (shortly before his death) for baptism, which he received on his profession. They therefore unwittingly attributed to him another religion. This serves as a memorial.

This Algerius, very young in years, was a student from the kingdom of Naples, and studied at Padua. A brother who spoke his language came to him there, with whom he inquired into the way and the will of the Lord. To this he earnestly gave heed, and was immediately baptized into his death (namely, the death of the Lord). As a courageous soldier and champion of Christ, he manfully and fearlessly, in deed and with might, confessed him, and witnessed and sealed his confession with his blood; he was thus made like his Master; for (like as Christ when he ascended out of Jordan), he was immediately assailed, being thrown into prison by the tempter and his instruments. There he endured many a severe conflict; but was always greatly strengthened and comforted by the Lord (whom he always set before him), and found great consolation, as his own writings abundantly show, which he wrote from Padua and while in prison to the brethren in Italy, to strengthen and comfort them in the sorrow which they felt on his account, and for whom, as for a young believer, they were concerned. But the Lord, powerfully girded him with strength, and by him, as a chosen vessel, brought glory to his name. After many trials, he was brought to Venice, where the whole Venetian council or nobility (like as the tempter did Christ) assailed him by earnest entreaties and caresses, by the offer of all kinds of worldly help and friendship; they thought to entice him and effect his fall; but, as an

2 Cor. xiii. 12.

Psa. xlvi. 11.

Matt. iv. 8.

immoveable pillar, he despised these things, and for Christ's sake contemned them; that he might with Moses and Paul win Christ. Ephes vi. 16. Phil. iii. 7. Heb. xi. 24.

When now, after long detention, they could not succeed, [190] he was sent to Rome and delivered over to the pope. After a hard and severe confinement, endured with great steadfastness, he offered up his life a sacrifice to the Lord of a sweet savour; joyfully and eagerly treading in the footsteps of his forefathers and the noble confessors of Christ, and having intimate fellowship in the sufferings of his Lord and Master. His end was crowned with victory and honour, even from all that reproached him. He drank and emptied the desired cup. Acts xvi. 23. 2 Cor. i. 5. Matt. xx. 22.

After all means had been employed with him, he was at last condemned to be burnt, but not in the way in which others, on account of their faith, have, after brief suffering, been despatched; being first strangled and then burnt, as was customary in Italy and Franconia. But this pious Algerius was somewhat more honoured by the Lord Christ, inasmuch as he had to begin and conquer in a much higher and more noble fight. 1 Pet. iv. 12. Ephes. vi. 11. Apoc. ii. 3.

When he was brought in a waggon to the square called Mercado, another and final attempt was made upon him. A Carthusian monk was sent,[r] who held a crucifix before him, and exhorted him to think yet once, before his departure, on his Lord and Saviour, and not die thus desperately hardened in error. He held the crucifix constantly before his eyes, which Algerius kept off with his hands, not being bound I understood, and with eyes lifted up to heaven, said, in his own language, with a loud voice, "My Lord and God dwells in heaven above." Matt. vi. 9.

[r] [The Carthusians were a branch of the great order of Benedictines, whose rules they followed with the addition of other austerities. The monasteries were usually called in this country Charter Houses, a corruption of the word Chartreux, the name of a place in France, where the first house was built, A.D. 1086.]

The people who were standing by, cried aloud, saying, "He has struck it! (meaning the crucifix). Away, away with him; he is altogether hardened and blind; it is all in vain," (for at Rome it is considered a strange event when the Carthusian monks cannot move an individual, on which account they are generally reserved to the last); on this they stripped him naked to his girdle, and then
2 Macc. vii. poured boiling-hot oil over his head and body. This the good and pious Algerius patiently endured (but beyond doubt felt painfully), rubbing it with his hands over his face, and thus rubbed off the skin and hair. He was then burned to ashes; which however is an unusual thing in Italy, for I have seen it with my own eyes, that they only roasted and scorched the sufferer in the fire, and then carried the dead body to the grave.

But, as has been observed, our Lord and God appointed this blessed Algerius to gain much higher honour. To
Rev. xiv. 13. Him and the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power of his Holy Spirit, wrought thus by him, be everlasting
Rom. xvi. 16. praise and glory. May He aid us, poor weak creatures, to
1 Cor x. 32. follow him. Amen. Yea, O Lord Jesus, Amen.

The brother Da. Gr., who signed this narrative (as the ancient copy shows), writes further:—

This was done in the year 1557, a short time before I arrived at Rome; for at that time Algerius was universally spoken of, and sung. With my own ears, I heard it said, by some, who wished to be good papists, and who saw him executed, with what astonishing constancy he died. And he did (so they said), truly and in his heart believe, and was what, in his great pain and martyrdom, he had confessed with his mouth before all men. Therefore, he no doubt ascended immediately into heaven, &c. Thus the adversaries of the saints of God are obliged themselves to
Deut xxxii. 31. bear testimony against their will.

Shortly after, a flood took place at Rome, the Tiber

overflowing its banks, and occasioning so much damage that some Romans say, that Rome at that time suffered as much loss as if the city had suddenly been plundered. I truly experienced my share of this, and never saw so great a want of bread. It is impossible to relate the dreadful sight, and what complaining there was, especially amongst the poor.[s] But it was not acknowledged as being just, &c. Wisd. xix. 12.

[In addition to the above, Van Braght records in the year 1557, the martyrdoms of ten other baptists at Antwerp, and of three women who were tied up in sacks and drowned. These persecutions do not appear to have prevented the extension of the truth. Between the Eifel mountains on the Rhine, and Moravia, not fewer than fifty churches are said to have been existing at this period, some of them having from five to six hundred members. Fifty elders and ministers gathered at one time at Strasburg, from a district of about a hundred miles in circumference, to consult together on the interests of Christ's kingdom. During the year, a public discussion, not very fairly conducted towards the baptists, was held at Pfedersheim, in the Palatinate of the Rhine.[t]]

CONRAD, THE SHOEMAKER.—ANNO 1558.

In this same year, a young brother named Conrad, a shoemaker, leaving Swabia with his people, was apprehended at Stein, near Krems, on the Danube, and brought

[s] [Churches, cloisters, and bridges were swept away by this flood, so that nearly a third part of the city was destroyed. Many people were drowned. By the overflowing of the Arno, at Florence, 15,000 persons are said to have lost their lives. At Palermo, in Sicily, 200 houses were washed away. The dearth extended to the Netherlands. Twisck's Chronijk. Deel. ii. fol. 1178, 1179.]

[t] [Ottius, Annales Anab. p. 127. Anno. 1557. Protocol zu Frankenthal, Pref.]

to Vienna, and delivered over to the magistrates.[u] He lay in confinement there a year and some weeks, for the faith
1 Cor. iv. 11. and truth of God. Confined among thieves and criminals in the chief prison, he suffered great want and hunger. Nothing was given them but what was brought them by
[191] other people. When these criminals had been tortured, as was often the case, they treated him in a shameful manner. He suffered greatly from hunger, before he could get anything to eat, though they had something. Thus he endured much misery, as well as tyranny in prison.

About this time, the Emperor Ferdinand came to Augsburg, to attend the Diet, when the bishop of Vienna had the brother brought before him twice, and each time early in the morning before day, being desirous to execute him within the prison. In the first interview he was briefly asked and urged to say, if he would renounce his belief or not; he answered them as briefly and said, they need not expect that from him, for he would sooner die.
Matt. vii. 14. It was the truth, and the way to eternal life, and this he would confess with his mouth as long as he retained his powers. They were unable to accomplish aught that day; and they were engaged with him from the morning early until midday. They then remanded him to prison, saying that he should reflect on the matter for three days, and then say what he would do. After three days, they again brought him out before day, and placed him before the bishop, his monks and priests; and he most faithfully defended the truth. The executioner was already there, waiting outside, thinking to behead him before the people should collect together; for they were afraid lest the truth

[u] [A few days before a similar company had been apprehended, the two leaders of which were unable to sustain the trial. They afterwards rejoined the churches in Moravia, and on repentance were received again into fellowship. MS. Cronickel, folio 84. Conrad is named by the author of this manuscript, Conrad Hainzeman.]

should be brought to the light, and his innocence be made known to the people. But the Lord again hindered them, so that he was again taken to prison. The priests meanwhile used many efforts with him, and gave him no rest.

Afterwards, they threatened to confine him in a filthy tower, in which no one had lain for eight years, and there to end his life. He said, he would abide the event, and fix his hope in God, who was able to deliver him from the filthy tower and from all their violence; for he thought that the Lord had appointed him to be a witness of the truth. He showed himself, throughout, so undaunted, that many of them were astonished; others said they would employ some new method with him, so that his situation should be fearful enough.

Psa. lvi. 4. Daniel iii. 17.

In the meantime, the steward of King Maximilian advised the bishop for the best. He also spoke concerning it to the king's Lutheran preacher, who mentioned it to the king, and did all he could to obtain his release, saying, that he was yet very young, and that it would be lamentable to put him to death for the sake of his faith. The King Maximilian, therefore, concluded to release him from further tyranny and suffering. He was accordingly let out of prison, and came again in peace to his brethren and the church.[v]

Acts xvi 39. Matt. xxiii. 8.

[v] [Conrad joined the churches in Moravia, and was ordained in 1562, at the same time with John Brael, by the laying on of hands of the elders, to the service of the gospel. In 1568, while in the mountains of Hungary, for recovery of his health, he sickened, and on his removal to Sabatisch, fell asleep in the Lord. MS. Cronickel, fol. 90, 94.]

EXAMINATION, TORTURE, AND SENTENCE OF ANNETGEN ANTHEUNIS, [JAN HENDRICKS,] STYNTGEN JANS, EVERT NOUTS, AND PETER VAN EYNOVEN, AT ROTTERDAM,

IN THE YEAR 1558.

Extracted from the Criminal Records of the City of Rotterdam.

On the 20th February, 1558, in presence of Adrian Fijck, Adrian Adrians, Adrian Robberts, Peter Hendricks, Cornelis Joosten, and Willem Muylwyk, aldermen, was verbally examined Annetgen Antheunis, above thirty years of age, born at Buuren:[w]

Says, that she always resided at Buuren, except for one year, during which she lived in this city; after that she left it, and about St. Victor's day last returned hither, and remained to the present time.

Says, that she did not inquire the people's names with whom she had formerly worked.

Says, that since St. Victor's day she has lived here in town with the other woman, named Styntje van Ick, of Maurick, near Buuren, and came hither with the said woman from Buuren.

Says, that Evert, of Antwerp, came yesterday evening to them, to the house where she was apprehended.

Says, that it is about two or three months (not certain as to the time) since she first knew the said Evert, and came by day to the house of Arent Willems, in the timber-yard, and wished to have bought a cheese.

Says, that she was not at confession, either at Easter or Christmas last.

Says, that she holds all that God has commanded.

Says, that she was baptized, according to the Lord's

[w] [In Gelderland.]

command, but does not, with certainty, know the day; that it was performed at the house of the aforesaid Arent Willems, in the timber-yard, and that she did [not] ask the name of the person who baptized her.

On the 20th February, aforesaid, being present as above, a certain Jan Hendriks of Utrecht, twenty-eight or twenty-nine years of age, was heard. [192]

Says, that since St. Bavon's day he has lived in this city, namely, in the house of Maritgen Jan Cheelen, at the Fish-dyke, but latterly in the house of Willem Reyers, where he was apprehended.

Says, that he lived at Dordrecht next to strong Neele.

Says, that he wishes not to say where he heard the teaching of certain persons.

Says, that he highly esteems the sacrament, but of the sacrament of the priests he does not approve; and that since he received the said instruction he has never been to the sacrament.

Says, that he was baptized since he believed, which is some time ago; but wishes not to say when, where, or by whom it was done.

Says, that his child was washed by the priest, but wishes not to tell the time.

On the same day, in the presence of the aforesaid justices, was examined Styntgen, Jan's daughter, forty years of age, from Maurick, Gelderland.

Says, that she has been in this city two or three years, with Annetgen Antheunis, and lodged in the timber yard; that she afterwards lived in a house where lace was made, and which stands behind a stable.

Says, that she does not approve of the sacrament that the priests administer, but esteems the sacrament as in-

stituted by God; that she cannot believe in the sacrament of the church, because she cannot comprehend it.

Says, that a certain time since she was baptized, but not twelve years ago; not here, however, in town, but at Utrecht.

On the same day, and in presence as above, a certain Evert Nouts from Antwerp, about twenty-seven years of age, was examined.

Says, that it is full three months since he came into this city; that he lodged some time in the timber yard, and afterwards made lace next to the house called the Falcon.

Says, that he believes in the sacrament as far as the scripture speaks thereof; but does not believe that God is present in the sacrament of the altar, he having no certainty thereof from scripture; but believes what the scripture teaches concerning it.

Says, that he was baptized according to the instructions of Christ, a little more than three years ago, at a certain place just outside Antwerp; that he was baptized by one Gillis van Aken, as he had heard him called, who was executed in the summer at Antwerp.

On the same day, and in presence of the above justices, was examined a certain Peter van Eynoven, born at Antwerp, twenty-eight years of age.

Says, that he has worked here in the town since fourteen days before Christmas, at his trade of silk-weaving, at the house of one Christian, whose wife is named Anneken.

Says, that his faith rests on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Says, that he believes the administration of the sacraments in the churches to be a great abomination, and a thing to be abhorred before God.

Says, that he was baptized agreeably to the instruction

of Christ, about two years ago; but wishes not to say by whom, or where it took place.

On the 19th of March, 1558, in presence of Adrian Fijck, Dirks van Hove, Adrian Adrians, Adrian Robbertson, Peter van Neck Hendricks, Cornelis Joosten, Willem Cornelis, Muylwyk and Dirk Dirks, justices, was examined by torture, at six o'clock in the morning, at the Stadthouse, Peter van Eynoven, born at Antwerp, about twenty-eight years of age.

Peter having been tortured on the rack, said that he was baptized about two years since at Antwerp, by one named Leonard, whose surname he did not know,[x] nor from whence he came; he had seen him at no other time than that when he baptized him.

Says, that when he was baptized, some others were present, whom he knows not by name.

Being asked concerning the other women to whom he spoke on his apprehension, says, that he knows not where they went, or who they were.

Says, that he who baptized them is called by them a teacher.

Says, that before he was baptized, he well understood that he must live agreeably to Christ's instructions; that he took a bible and testament, which he read, and found it was as he had been told; but he does not know who it was that had previously taught him those things, because they do not often inquire the names of other persons, nor do they wish to know them, lest they bring their brethren into trouble.

Says, that his master, Christian, was of the same faith, [193] and also his wife, as himself, but does not know whether they have been baptized.

[x] [Leonard Bouwens, doubtless. See ante, p. 107.]

Jan Hendriks, of Utrecht, twenty-nine years of age, being severely tortured on the rack:

Says, that he was baptized by one Leonard, but does not know whence he came, nor had he ever seen him before that time; he was baptized by him in this city a year and a half since, and it took place in the timber-yard.

Says, that his child was baptized at Dordrecht by the priest at the font.

Says, that no one he knew was present at the time that he was baptized.

Styntgen, Jan's daughter, from Utrecht, about forty years of age.

Styntgen says, that he who baptized her was called Leonard, and that it took place in Utrecht, five or six years ago, in the house of one Gerrit; that she does not know the surname of the said Leonard, nor whence he came, for she neither asked, nor was very desirous of knowing, either the Christian or surname of her companions, that she might not involve them.

Says, that there were others baptized with her, but she did not know them.

The justices being assembled together in conclave, resolved that the further consideration of the day for the execution of the above prisoners be postponed until the return of the executioner, in order that the said prisoners may, in the meantime, reflect on their condition, and that it may be seen if, by mild means, they may be persuaded; if all the justices be then at home, the sheriff shall with expedition proceed.

On the 28th March, Cornelis Joosten and Dirk Dirks,

justices, not being at home, the justices resolve that the business of the aforesaid prisoners remain adjourned until the time that the same are at home.

The bailiff protests, on account of the costs, against the unwillingness of the justices to fix the day for the execution of the said prisoners.

The justices protest and say that Cornelis Joosten and Dirk Dirks being absent, each one having mutually bound himself to be present in order to proceed with the business of the said prisoners, that they abide by the resolution now made.

On the 26th March, all the confessions of the said five prisoners, obtained by torture, were read to them. From the balcony of the Townhall, and in sight of the people, they publicly confessed and acknowledged the same to be true. The day of execution was finally appointed the said prisoners by Gerrard van der Merzche, bailiff, and fixed for Monday, the 28th March. Done as above, in the presence of Adrian Fijck, Adrian Adriaens, Adrian Robberts, Peter Hendricks, Cornelis Joosten, Willem Cornelis, and Dirk Dirks, justices.

Sentence on the 28th March, 1558.

In conformity with the prescribed laws, and in pursuance of his imperial majesty's proclamations, now confirmed by his royal majesty, who will have the same maintained in their several points and articles; having heard the demand of the bailiff and the confessions of Evert Nouts, Peter van Eynhoven, both of Antwerp, and Jan Hendricks, of Utrecht, prisoners; the same shall be executed on the said prisoners agreeably to the proclamation. Done in the presence of Adrian Fijck, Adrian Adriaens, Adrian Robberts, Peter Hendriks, Cornelis

Joosten, Willem Cornelis, and Dirk Dirks, justices, and Master Roeland, pensionary.

Concerning Styntgen, Jan's daughter, and Annetgen, Antheunis' daughter, they are detained in custody, for reasons moving the justices thereto, until Easter.

MEMORIAL.

On the 28th March, 1558, the foregoing sentence, written by the secretary, Mathys Bark, was pronounced; and the aforesaid prisoners were condemned to be executed by fire. Preparations and implements were accordingly made and procured; and three large piles fixed near each other, before the Townhall, that the prisoners after being strangled might be burned. The place was partitioned off by planks and stakes. It was published by sound of bell from the balcony of the Townhall, in the name of the bailiff, sheriff, burgomasters, and justices; that every one should depart out of the ring on pain of forfeiting his upper garment; and that no one should hinder or resist the execution of justice, by word or deed, on pain of forfeiting life and property. Between eleven and twelve o'clock, all implements necessary for the execution being
[194] ready, the aforesaid Jan Hendricks was led out, and placed at the middle stake on a stool, with a cord round his neck, with which he was to be strangled. Master Aert, the young assistant of the executioner, and Master John, of Haarlem, then tightly twisted the cord from behind with a stick, and afterwards pulled the stool from under the feet of Jan Hendricks. Whilst thus suspended he with great force dragged him by the body and legs. The said Master John then came with a bunch of oat-straw, with some gunpowder in it, and held it before his face to scorch him. But Master Aert, with tongs, took a burning coal to throw into the gunpowder. Three or four

times it was so badly thrown that it did not reach the powder, but only made the straw smoke. On this loud cries came from the people, one saying, "You throw the fire awkwardly;" another, "You put the man to a thousand deaths;" and at last, "Strike the executioner dead, stone him," and such like. A woman now threw a slipper, and others standing around began to throw stones at the executioner. Master John was pushed away, and driven by the citizens into the house of Jan Sempel, at the Golden Waggon, opposite the Townhall. The young executioner, Master Aert, together with the officers of the procureur-general of Schieland, and of the town, who had been called in to the assistance of the executioner, fled to the Townhall. They were soon followed by Gerrard van der Merzche, the bailiff, leaving Jan Hendricks still suspended by the rope.

The justices, pensionary, and secretary, seeing the great tumult, went to the top of the Townhall tower. Adrian Robberts, a justice, and Mathys Bark, the secretary, were the first to reach it, who, looking over the parapet of the tower, saw Jan Hendricks still hanging at the stake; but the planks and posts which were intended to fence in the execution that none might approach, were with great violence broken down and carried away. A boy then ran to the stake to try to cut the cord with which Jan was strangled, but durst not venture. Another then came, who cut the cord in pieces, so that Jan fell to the ground. As they were for the most part strangers who did all this, the burghers living thereabout shut their doors close. The bailiff, with the procureur-general, and his officers, with those from Schieland, fortified the Townhall with benches, planks, and the like, to secure the other two under sentence, and the women. But the tumult and uproar increased more and more. The rioters pulled up the stakes, and the posts in the streets, in order to break open

the Townhall door; but finding the door well secured, they ran armed with stakes into the alley of the hospital, and forced open the door behind the Townhall, the entrance to the chamber of Schieland and to the Treasury. The bailiff, with his officers, who were then with the prisoners, hearing this, left the two women (Annetgen being a cripple, and unable to walk), and brought up from the lower part of the Townhall the two condemned prisoners, and fled with them to the tower. The rioters broke into the Townhall both before and behind, and beat the doors in pieces. They first took the two women, and, leading them outside the town, carried them away. Returning to the Townhall, they broke open the door by which the tower was ascended, crying out and demanding to have the two male prisoners, or else they would murder them all, and set the tower on fire. At last the officers released the two prisoners, who were immediately taken out of the city by the rioters. After this the rioters continued their cries, demanding the young hangman, and also the bailiff and the justices. The officers, being a square lower on the tower than their lordships the justices, told the rioters that the justices and the young executioner had left the Townhall. There could not be greater silence in a cloister than there was at that time amongst their lordships; for, although some of them did not show outwardly the sadness of their hearts, they who were quick of sight could perceive it in their countenances. Though it was past noon, and no one had that day eaten much, I believe that if there had been an abundance of dressed food, boiled and roasted, very little of it would have been touched.

At last (God be praised) the tumult ceased, through the faithful loyalty of Adrian Jacobs Tromper, a councillor of
[195] the city, who, having fled out of the ark, returned with an olive-branch, and informed the justices as they were sitting in anguish, that the riot was over, and the rioters were

dispersed. About two o'clock in the afternoon, their lordships descended from the tower. The town, however, was still in commotion. The prisoner Jan Hendricks, who had been cut down, was brought to the house of one Kers Goverts, a brewer, next to the Town-hall, and remained there until about five or six o'clock in the evening. He was then put openly into a boat, and taken outside the town, he being, it is said, still alive.

The train-bands were ordered to keep guard that night. The next day, the 29th March, a committee, appointed by the city, were sent to the Hague, to the lords of the council, to make known what had passed, and to present an apology on behalf of the town. Information was requested of the commissaries how to clear the city of the tumult. Heer Wilhelm Zeegers, lord of Wassenhoven, with Mr. Christiaen de Waert, were accordingly sent the next day. The information regarding the occurrence thus obtained was laid before the council, and his royal majesty being informed that the town was sufficiently garrisoned, sent with all diligence (the margrave of Veere being sick) for the count of Boussu and Mynheer van Cruijningen, who secretly passed through here, on Easter eve, for the Hague; and there, on Easter day, assembled the whole council. They wrote to the bailiff to close the booms and gates, and that those who were known and reported should be taken by night out of their beds. This was done that night, as soon as Easter day was over. With the help of the train-bands, and in the presence of the burgomaster, one Chiel Pot was apprehended. The day after, the count of Boussu came into the town, with Mynheer van Cruijningen; also Heer Gerrit van Assendelft, president of the council, Wilhelm Zeegers, lord of Wassenhoven, Mr. Cornelis Zuiss, Arnold Sasbout, Cornelis van Weldam, and Dominicus Boot.

[It would appear that many persons were punished for

their participation in this riot, which appears to have been provoked by the numerous cruelties and tortures that were now inflicted on large numbers of persons for their faith. There is no evidence that any baptists were mixed up with the tumult.[y] The popular feeling favoured them; and it revolted at the shedding of the blood of innocent men and women, whose only crime was their rejection of the errors of Rome. The records of the examinations and punishments of the rioters are incomplete, and one instance only of punishment is given by Van Braght.]

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[190] THOMAS VAN IMBROEK.—5TH MAY, ANNO 1558.

Acts xvi. 14. At Cologne, on the Rhine, was apprehended a god-fearing brother, named Thomas van Imbroek, a printer,
Acts xii. 3. for the sake of the truth, in the year 1557. He was confined in a tower. Being afterwards examined concerning baptism and marriage, he so replied to their objections by the word of God, that they ceased to ask him any more questions, and removed him into another tower. His wife wrote a letter to him, exhorting him to contend with
Matt. xxiv. 13 piety, and remain stedfast to the truth. For such consolation he heartily thanked her, and showed by many
Psa. xxxi. 20. scriptures that the righteous have always suffered; that he stood with a conscience void of offence before God;
Matt. xix. 22. forsaking wife, child, and all earthly things to follow him, and to take up Christ's cross, seeing that God had counted him worthy of the same.

Two priests afterwards came to him, who discoursed with him on infant baptism, but they did not agree with each other; for the one would have children that died unbaptized to be lost, the other admitted that they

[y] [Ten Cate, Gesch. der Doops. en Holland, i. 43.]

were saved. They urged him vehemently to repent: but he said, "That which I maintain the scripture has taught me, but I will cheerfully submit to him who, by the same scripture, teaches me better." They said: "You despise our communion, and will not be taught by us." He said: "The reason why I despise your church, and do not come to your communion, is, that you do not keep your church pure; for oath-breakers, whoremongers, and such like, are all pious brethren with you." They asked him why he did not have his children baptized? He answered: "The scripture teaches nothing of infant baptism; and they who will be baptized according to God's word must first be believers." They then said that he was a heretic; but this they could not prove. They afterwards brought him to the rack, where he was closely questioned, but not tortured, although the executioner had all things ready, for the magistrates were not agreed among themselves. This occurred three times successively. After this he was brought into the landgrave's house, who would willingly have set him at liberty, had he not dreaded the emperor's proclamation and the bishop's displeasure. But Thomas was undaunted, full of comfort, prepared to lay down his life for the name of Christ, and to abide steadfast in the truth and love of God, so that *neither fire, water, sword, nor any other thing, should move him thence.* When again brought from the landgrave's house, he suffered many temptations during the whole night, from the landgrave's people and others, who undertook to teach and instruct him. But all in vain; for they were such as were not themselves instructed or taught of God.

2 Tim. iii. 16.
Eccles ii. 12.
Eph. v. 27.
Gal. v. 19.
Mark xvi. 16.
John vii. 41.
John xix. 11.
Prov. xxix. 25.
Matt. xx 22.
Rom. v. 5.
Rom. viii. 38.
John vi. 45.

He was, finally, brought before the high court of justice; where he was condemned to death, in the presence of the landgrave, who then, for the first time, administered the law, and dyed his staff of office in Christian blood. He was beheaded on the 5th day of

March, in the year 1558, aged twenty-five years, as a pious witness of Christ, for his steadfast perseverance in the true faith.

John xv. 27. Mark xiii. 13. Acts xii. 2.

He sent letters from his prison to his wife and brethren, and a confession of his faith concerning baptism, of which a small volume was published.[z]

GOVERT JASPERS.—1558.

[200] About this time a lay-brother, named Govert Jaspers, with two others, left the cloister of the Cross-bearers at Goes;[a] but they remained not long together, for the one became entirely estranged and embraced the world. The other, from fear of persecution, went to Friesland; he became there a member of the church and died piously. But Govert Jaspers, shortly after his departure from the cloister, was apprehended while sitting in the field reading a Testament, and brought into the city of Brussels, in Brabant, where, for the testimony of the truth in which he steadfastly persevered he suffered greatly; yea, at last, death itself. As a good soldier of Jesus Christ he pressed through the strait gate, that he might take by violence the kingdom of God, which he preferred to all the riches of this world.

Matt. x. 22. Luke xiii. 24. Matt. xi. 12.

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[201] DANIEL VERKAMPT.—1558.

In these times, after suffering greatly from persecution, a young disciple, named Daniel Verkampt, was

[z] [Ottius, Annales. Anab. An. 1558. p. 128. Van Braght has preserved two letters of Thomas, and in his first volume the treatise on baptism, p. 402.]

[a] [In the island of Beveland, ten miles from Flushing. The *crosiers*, or cross-bearers, were an order of regular canons founded in 1211. This order of monks took part in the Albigensian crusade. Bergier, Dict. ii. 257.]

seized at Kortrijk in Flanders, for living agreeably to God's word. Being sharply examined by the dean, Ronse, and Polet, he freely and boldly confessed his faith, and expressed his determination to abide steadfastly in it, even unto death, but he would not bring into difficulty any of his companions in the faith. 2 Tim. vi. 13. Matt. xvi. 25.

Afterwards Ronse and Polet sent for the youth's mother; she was a little old woman and walked with a staff. On coming before them they stated to her that she (according to the emperor's proclamation) had forfeited both life and goods for having harboured her son, whom they had found to be a heretic.

She mildly replied: "Gentlemen, must I forfeit life and goods, because I have now and then harboured my own son in his distress, whom I bore on my heart, brought forth with pain, and nurtured with anxiety, he being neither a thief nor a rogue, but admitted to be the most worthy young man in our village? and that only, because you say he is a heretic? I think that, were the emperor here present, whose proclamation you say you have, he would say that you make a wrong use of it, and would commend me because my mother's heart was moved to compassionate my son, who never deserved otherwise from me. Verily, gentlemen, this is contrary to the wisdom and courtesy that become you; for be assured that, at the same hour that you came to seize him, if I could have concealed him in my womb, and again have borne him nine months, and give him birth, and bring him up, as I once before had done, God knows how willingly I would have done it." This she said with such emotion that all the gentlemen present freely admitted that she had done nothing contrary to the dictates of a mother's heart. The mother was set free, but the son had to pay the price of his constancy, and of the love of God which burned ardently in him, with the flames. He was burned alive for the testimony of 1 Pet. iv. 15. Isa. xlix. 15. Matt. xiii. 13. Rom. v. 5.

Matt. xxv. 42. Jesus Christ, who shall give him true and everlasting liberty.

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[202] JANNEKEN AND NOELE.—A.D. 1558.

A young female, named Janneken, was apprehended at Antwerp for her faith. Before the magistrates, she made a fearless confession of her faith. The margrave said, "Janneken, if you will recant, I will show you favour;
1 Pet. v. 3. do as I wish you, and I will grant you your life." But she answered, "The life that you would give me I do not desire; your promises are vain, and fragile as a reed, and
Jer. xvii. 5. would bring me into greater trouble. *All that trust in man, are accursed.*"

A teacher, named Balthazar, endeavoured to persuade her that God was in the sacraments. She would not admit this, but said, "You profane God by your body; only read the Paternoster." He, having read that, she said,
Matt. vi. 9. "Do you not observe that you read that he is in heaven? how then dare you assert that he is in the sacrament?"

At the tribunal, she was asked by the sheriff, if she had been re-baptized? She said, "If you will question
Eph. iv. 5. me concerning my faith, I will freely confess it to you; or, are you yourself ashamed of it? I acknowledge but
Mark xvi. 16. one baptism, which must be upon faith, and concerns not children; it requires first, amendment of life." The sheriff
Acts ii. 38. said, "We have done enough to win you over; had you suffered yourself to be persuaded to recant, you would
[203] have done well." She answered, "You have had regard to my body, but not to my soul, which you would willingly
John i. 12. destroy. But God will receive me as his child, and make me his heir. And though you are now in dignity a sheriff; you will, nevertheless, lament it at the judgment-seat of God, and wish rather to have been a shepherd in the fear

of God." She was at last condemned to die; and having commended her spirit into the hands of God, she was drowned in a tub, with another woman, named Noele. Luke xxiii. 46.

JORIS WIPPE, JOOSTEN'S SON, PUT TO DEATH AT DORDRECHT—A.D. 1558.

Joris Wippe, while living in the darkness of popery, was a burgomaster at Menin, in Flanders,[b] the place of his birth. Coming afterwards to the knowledge of the gospel, he was obliged to flee from his native country. He repaired to Dort, in Holland, to reside there, where he set up the business of a fuller. After that he had lived there some time, and was becoming known, he was sent for (at the instigation of the enemies of the truth) to attend the magistrates in the great church. Much disheartened, Joris consulted some clothiers, for whom he worked, persons of reputation, to know what he ought to do. These people, giving the magistracy credit for everything good, thought it advisable that he should go and hear what they had to say. The gentlemen seeing him come, were grieved. They had rather that he had taken their message as a warning to leave the place privately; [204] for they were not men thirsting for innocent blood. But as he had appeared, the sheriff, who was about to leave the church, apprehended him, as one who, by the emperor's proclamation, had forfeited life and goods. This took place on the 28th April, 1558. Being apprehended, the magistrates employed every method to avoid putting him to death. He was sent to the Hague, that is, to the court of Holland, and was there examined; but as he had lived at Dort, and had been apprehended there, he was sent back, and was there ultimately put to death.

[b] [A fortress close to the boundary line of France.]

He left a good testimony behind him of his liberality to the poor. When Joris was sentenced to die, the executioner lamented, with weeping eyes, that he must put a man to death who had often fed his wife and children, and would rather be discharged from his office than execute a man who had done him and others so much good, and never any harm. Joris was finally drowned in the prison by night, in a wine cask filled with water, by one of the thief-takers, who, at the magistrate's direction performed the office of executioner, and threw him backwards into the water. Thus he offered up his body to the Lord on the 1st of October, in the forty-first year of his age. The next day his body was suspended by the legs on a high gibbet, at the place of execution, for the sport of the people. Like his master, Christ, he had to be numbered with the transgressors. The day following some malefactors were whipped and banished. The executioner, after executing justice on these, and still sorrowing over the death of Joris Wippe, said, "They crucified Christ, but Barabbas they released."

During his imprisonment he wrote some letters, three of which have reached us. He would have written more, but such special care was taken that he should have no ink, that he wrote the last letter, one to his three eldest children, with mulberry-juice.[c]

[c] [To the above account Van Braght has appended Wippe's sentence, extracted from the town records of Dort, besides the three letters referred to. He left to mourn his death a wife and seven children, four of them girls.]

HANS SMITH, HENDRIK ADAMS, HANS BEK, MATTHIAS SMITH, DILEMAN SNYDER,[d] WITH SEVEN OTHERS.—ANNO 1558. [209]

In the year 1558 the brother Hans Smith, a servant of the word of God, was sent out by the church to the work of the Lord, to seek and collect together those that were zealous for the truth. While engaged in this good work, and purposing to travel through the Netherlands, he was apprehended at Aix-la-Chapelle, with five brethren and six sisters, on the 9th January, in a house where they were assembled for exercise in the word of God and prayer. Many officers and children of Pilate came, through treachery, to the place at night with spears, halberds, and naked swords, and well provided with cords; they surrounded the house and seized and bound these children of God; they even took a mother with her infant that lay in the cradle; but the prisoners were courageous and comforted each other, not dismayed, since they were apprehended for the truth of God. Being thus filled with consolation they began to sing; they were very soon separated from each other and committed to prison, where the sisters experienced great joy and sang, so that the people were astonished. In the morning they were brought before the judge, who spake to each of them separately; as he found them steadfast he ordered them to be taken again to prison. On the following day the minister was called up again before the justices, that he might give information how many he had baptized, who they were, and where the church held its meetings; but he told them that they must know that he would rather lose his life than by informing them become a traitor. He was, therefore,

1 Tim. iii. 1. Acts xiii. 3. Acts vi. 4. Matt. xxvi. 47. John i. 12. Acts xxi. 33. Deut. iii. 28, Matt. x. 26, Matt. x. 22. John xv. 13,

[d] [In the MS. Cronickel the names of these brethren are thus given:—Hans Raiffer, a smith, Matthias Schmid, Heinrich Adam, Old Werner and Tillman, fol. 83.]

tortured and racked for about a quarter of an hour; he readily submitted, drew his clothes off himself, and went to the rack. Unable to effect their purpose they went away, but soon came back and said: "You must tell us what we have asked for, or we will torture you till your limbs are torn asunder." They also asked him concerning infant baptism; he replied that "infant baptism was an institution of men, as such he regarded it, and not as true Christian baptism."

Matt. xxvi. 26. Mark xiv. 23. Luke xxii. 20.

They also inquired his opinion of the sacrament. He said: "I esteem it highly, but what the priests use is not the true supper of Christ, but an idol."

They then bound him hand and foot, and hung a great stone on his feet, nearly a hundred pounds in weight, and drew him up, but the ring broke from the stone and left it lying on the ground; they then took a cord, made it fast to the stone instead of the broken ring, and hung it on his foot. They let him hang a considerable time, but could [210] not obtain their wish; he was, therefore, let down and put into prison until early on Sunday morning, when the lord of the city and seven priests came to him and asked him concerning his mission. He replied that he had not taken upon himself the office, but God, and his Spirit in his church, had called him; for, as God sent his Son, and the Son sent his apostles into all the world, so he still sends his servants, by his Spirit, that they should first preach the word of God, and then baptize those who hear, understand, and believe it, but not mere babes. They also asked him concerning magistrates, whether he considered them to be Christian or not? He said that, in the first place, he regarded them as ministers of God, but that they were misled by the priests and erroneously instructed, and should not be incorporated with the church of Christ. They further inquired whence magistracy was derived; he said, "The office and the power is of God." They next asked if

Eph. iv. 11. John iii. 16. Isa i. 26. Matt. xxviii. 19. Rom. xiii. 14.

they were Christians; he answered that, if they deny themselves, go without the camp, take up the cross, lay aside tyranny and pomp, and follow Christ, then are they Christians, but not otherwise. They also interrogated him concerning swearing; he said that Christ had forbidden it, and many other things too long to write. Matt. xvi. 24. Matt. v. 34.

Finally, they asked him concerning the incarnation of Christ; he said that he believed that Christ was truly God and truly man, sin only excepted. At last they said to him, that if he would renounce his baptism and acknowledge that he had erred, they would then show him favour. He replied that, as he had taught the truth in its purity, he would hold it fast. They then said, that as he was in their city he must not do so there; that if they did not punish such as he, the king or the new emperor would inflict punishment on them. Thus, like Pilate, they excused themselves. The brother told them that, nevertheless, it would fall heavily upon them; for, though God forgave all sin, yet he would require innocent blood; they must not think that they would escape punishment when they had put him to death, for his cause would come before Christ; he would judge the same and take it up as his own at that day. After this he was led back again to prison, where he remained until Monday evening; the judge then came again, accompanied by others and a monk; they effected but little, for he so completely put the monk to shame that he was glad to get away. Many other monks and priests were subsequently appointed to treat and dispute with him, but they were put to shame and contempt, and could not induce this pious man to apostatize. A short time afterwards they brought them forth again and questioned them; but God always gave them a mouth and wisdom to speak freely and boldly, so that they could find no unrighteousness nor cause of death in them, except that they did not sufficiently respect the John i. 1, John ix. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 22. Matt. xxvii. 24. Jer. vii. 6. Acts xii. 4. Acts ix. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 9. Luke xxi. 14.

emperor. On one occasion they brought to brother
2 Cor. xi. 3. Hendrik in particular a subtle serpent and slanderer, and
2 Tim. iii. 2. said to him: "You do not like spiritual persons (that is, monks and priests), we have, therefore, brought you a learned layman to instruct you;" but Hendrik replied that he did not desire to be instructed by him unless he was
John vi. 45. 2 Tim. iii. 16. Matt. viii. 22. sufficiently instructed by God and his word, for he wished not to seek the living among the dead. This learned man wishing to prove infant baptism, said that the apostles had established it; but Hendrik answered in such a manner that he was constrained to admit that no little children had been baptized in the apostles' times; and also that, in
Deut. i. 39. their infancy, they had no faith. Hendrik wrote this with some chalk on the table, and called upon his gentlemen opponents to be witnesses of it, and also how silenced their advocate had become. He further said: "Thus are all your learned men confounded before the word of the Lord." Some of the gentlemen said that, if these men should be put to death, they would leave home.

Matt. xxiii. 8. On one occasion all the twelve brethren and sisters were left together, from ten o'clock in the morning until ten o'clock in the evening; they were cheerful and com-
Matt. vii. 7. fortable; spoke with each other from the word of the Lord, and began to pray and glorify God. The brother Hans, as the minister, took the lead in prayer in a loud voice, so that the people ran thither and listened; the gentlemen hearing of it sent the officer to inquire for what reason they made such a loud noise; they answered that they had been engaged in prayer, but they had just concluded before the officer came. One brother, Matthias,
Acts iv. 24. said: "We will call upon God, whether any one opposes it or not." At about ten o'clock they were again separated from each other; they sang with joy on their way through the town, confessing their faith. Some gentlemen of the council were blood-thirsty, and wished to put them to

death; but others opposed it, for they regarded them as guiltless. The executioner came as many as five times expecting to put them to death, but his intention could not, either time, be fulfilled; it was wished to execute the minister and brother Hendrik first, for they had taken the lead in vindicating their cause and in opposing their adversaries, in order that the rest might be terrified. When the minister heard of his approaching death he raised his voice with joy, and began to sing. He gave thanks to God, earnestly praying that God would grant him acceptance in his sight. Luke xxiii. 4. [211]

The 23rd day of August was fixed on which to execute the minister Hans and the brother Hendrik; they were led to the arch near the pillory, to which place many ran, and also some who cleaved to them, and who had sent them food and drink. With a smiling countenance they passed through the people towards the place of execution. The minister, observing the great concourse of people from every quarter, said, "Oh, what a glorious festival will that be, to which so many people repair!" They were exceeding glad, and hoped that day to be in paradise with all their brethren and sisters that had gone before them. Two monks also came, who sought to corrupt them with false doctrine. The minister for some time withstood them, showing them with what deceit they went about; but at last he would speak no more with them, but said, "I will abide by the truth; the hour of my departure is at hand; I have now something else to do than to oppose you." Being now to be condemned, the seven aldermen could not agree upon the sentence, and informed them that they would send another learned man to instruct them; if they heard him, they would show them every possible favour; otherwise they must put them to death, though they would do it with reluctance. But Hans and Hendrik said fearlessly, that they Luke xxiii. 43. Rev. vi. 11

Matt. x. 22. Mark xiii. 13. Heb. x. 38. should remain steadfast, and would not turn from the truth, either to the right hand or the left; that on their account there was no need of apology or delay, but that directions might at once be given to proceed with the execution; and that if they sought further accusation against them they were satisfied with the decision of the gentlemen. The gentlemen now consulted together and let the spectators again depart. But these two men, observing that the execution was again suspended, were sorrowful, for they had entirely resigned themselves to Gen. iii. 1. die, and thought they had long enough resisted the wiles of the serpent. The multitude therefore dispersed, each one to his home, like a troop that has lost a battle. As the evening approached, the brethren were led again to prison. For this they were sorry; they had thought to have that day sealed the truth with their blood, but they had to tarry yet awhile. The conducting of them back again to prison, however, occasioned many reflections in the minds of the people; some said that God was against the proceeding and had stopped it.

One of the council had firmly resolved that the execution should take place that day week, and be no longer delayed, but it was not done. They lay in prison till the harvest, undergoing many sufferings and trials, after which they were condemned and executed.

Hans Smith, as the minister, was the first led forth. In passing through the town he sang cheerfully, and after that spake but little. He hastened to the place of execution as a patient, silent lamb. He was strangled at the stake with a knot. The body was then chained Acts vii. 60. securely and scorched with fire. Thus he presented his Rom. xii. 1. sacrifice the 19th day of October, in the year 1558.[e]

[e] [During his confinement, Hans Smith wrote many consolatory letters to the church and to his companions in tribulation. The

Three days afterwards the others were brought out and condemned to death, viz., Hendrik Adams and his brother-in-law, Hans Bek. There was one of the city council at Aix-la-Chapelle who was always violently opposed to the brethren. It happened on one occasion that, as they were dealing with Hendrik, who would not suffer himself to be moved, this councillor became wroth, and said, "Away with them, away with them, to death and the flames, for it is all lost trouble; no more favour shall be offered them." But brother Hendrik said to him, "You will not live to see the day of my death." This truly came to pass, for he died three days before Hendrik, on the same day that the minister, Hans Smith, was executed. Lying on his death-bed, and being near his end, he fell into a state of despair, tore out his beard, and cried out in a most fearful manner that he had condemned many persons, in doing which he had certainly sinned; that God would punish him for blood-thirstiness; with similar expressions. Matt. vii. 2. Psa. lv. 23.

As the brother Hendrik Adams with the rest was led out to execution, the executioner bound his hands so tight that his fingers became black; but raising his hands to God, he praised him that he was counted worthy thus to suffer. Meanwhile the bands on his hands became loose. They were bound again as tight as before, but all to no purpose, for as often as he raised his hands again, the bands again fell off. This happened several times. The judge became angry, and told the executioner to bind him fast. The executioner, however, said, "You see that the binding is of no use." The last time Hendrik threw the band away amongst the people, so that he was not bound again, saying, "God will not have me to be bound." He also said that God was opposed to such violence, and Acts v. 41.

hymns he composed in prison continued to be long used in the churches after his decease. MS. Cronickel, fol. 83]

continued to speak fearlessly to the end. After this they strangled the two brethren, Hendrik Adams and his brother-in-law, with a knot, at the stake, as they had [212] done the minister, and then bound them thereto with a chain, and scorched them. This took place the 22nd day of the month of October, anno 1558. A great number of people were present, and afterwards also, when the brethren Matthias Smith and Dileman Snyder were executed on the 4th January in the beginning of the year 1559. Thus all these five valiantly and perseveringly witnessed the truth with their blood, although some of them were not yet united with the church.

Mark xiii. 13.
Rev. vi. 9.

The sixth brother, who had been apprehended with the others, fell from the faith, through the persuasion of the ungodly; but, after his release, he deeply lamented his fall, and repenting earnestly and sincerely, returned again to the church. The six sisters that had been apprehended at the same time, were severely scourged with rods, and suffered to go their way. Rejoicing in the Lord, and persevering in the faith, they returned to their friends and companions in the truth.

Matt. xxvi. 7.
Acts iii. 19.
Acts v. 41.

JAQUES D'AUCHY,

APPREHENDED 1557, BUT PUT TO DEATH FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, AT LEEUWAARDEN, 1558.

A confession of the faith of Jaques d'Auchy, being in prison in the city of Leeuwaarden, in Friesland, and afterwards sealed with his blood.

I believe in one only God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, as it is written; in whom Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, and all the prophets believed.

Gen. i. 1.
Heb. xi.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the only Son of the Father, who was in the beginning with God: and when the time

John i. 14.

was fulfilled (which God had promised), this Word became flesh: and was born of the lineage of David, of a pure virgin, espoused to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, who was blessed above all women. Micah v. 1. Gal. iv. 4. Dan. vii. 24. John i. 14. Rom. i. 3. Matt i. 18. Luke i. 38. John xv. 24.

I believe that this true Son of God, made known the word of his Father by many signs and miracles, and was afterwards delivered over to death under Pontius Pilate, and was crucified and buried. Matt. xxvii. 2. Isa. iii. 7.

I believe that this same Jesus Christ suffered for us; and when we were enemies tasted death for us, that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Rom. v. 10. John iii. 16.

I believe that this our Saviour rose from the dead, as he had before said, and sitteth on the right hand of God his Father. Matt. xxviii. 6. Matt. xvii. 9. Mark xvi 19. Acts vii. 56.

I believe also in the Holy Ghost, as John testifies in his first epistle in the 5th chapter, saying, that *there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.* I believe also in the communion of saints, whose prayers avail much for us. James v. 16.

I believe also in the holy church, which consists of such as believe in Jesus Christ and are baptized by one Spirit into one body, as Paul saith; and that Jesus Christ is the head thereof, viz., of the holy church, as is there written. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. v. 23. Col. i. 18.

I believe that this holy church has power to shut and open, to bind and loose, and whatsoever they bind on earth is bound in heaven; and whatsoever they loose on earth is loosed in heaven. I believe that God has ordained in this holy church apostles, prophets, teachers, bishops, and deacons. Matt. xvi. 19. 1 Cor. xii. 28.

I believe and confess likewise, one baptism in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded and ordained, and as the apostles have practised and written; and I also Eph. iv. 5. Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts ii. 38, 41, and xvi. 31. Rom. vi. 4.

Col. ii. 12. 1 Cor. xii. 13. believe that all those that have received this baptism are members of the body of Jesus Christ in the holy church.

Concerning the holy supper of Jesus Christ, I believe and acknowledge what Christ hath himself said, according to the scriptures, that, *as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:* Matt. xxvi. 26. *Take, eat; this is my body: and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink, and divide it* Luke xxii. 19. *among yourselves; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. Do* 1 Cor. x. 16. *this in remembrance of me.* I believe this, according to the testimony of Paul, who says, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the* John vi. 54. *body of Christ? Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Gen. ii. 24. I acknowledge and confess the marriage state to be an 1 Cor. vii. ordinance of God. Namely, one man and one woman joined together in the name of the Lord in the holy Matt. xix. 5. Mark x. 7. church. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and* 1 Cor. vi. 16. *mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh; wherefore, they are no more twain, but one flesh;* Heb. xiii. 4. *therefore, what God hath joined together let not man put asunder; and the bed is undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

[213] I confess that fasting and prayer are very profitable, as Acts xiii. 2. practised by the apostles.

I hold the words of St. James to be good and right, James v. 16. where he says, *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.* I believe that men should do this with an upright heart.

Wisd. vi. 4. I acknowledge likewise and confess, that magistrates are appointed and ordained of God for the punishment of evil 1 Pet. ii. 13. doers, and the protection of the good; for they bear not the

sword in vain; to which powers the scriptures command us to be obedient, and instruct us to pray for the same, that, as Paul says, *we may lead a quiet and peaceable life.* Paul likewise calls the power the minister of God. Seeing then, that he is a servant of God, I would pray that it may please him to be merciful to me, as God is merciful. I here disclaim all those that desire to oppose the power by the sword and violence, and consider that to be a devilish doctrine.

Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 1. Ezek. xviii. 23.

I believe also in the resurrection of the dead, as it is written, that all men shall rise from the dead in their own bodies, when the Lord shall come in the clouds with his angels; then he will judge every man according to his works.

Dan. xii. 2. Job. xix. 25. Matt. xxv. 31. Matt. xvi. 27.

In short, I believe whatever a true Christian is bound to believe concerning the holy church. I believe with my whole heart the articles of the creed, and will live and die therein. Here I renounce all false doctrines, heresies, and sects, which do not agree with God and his word. And wherein I may have erred, through any false doctrine, I pray Almighty God that it may please him, of his great love and compassion, to forgive me.

I likewise pray, that wherein I may have transgressed against the emperor or the king, or any other person, it may please them to forgive me, for the great love and mercy of God.

The confession of Jaques d'Auchy, which he made before the commissary and the inquisitor.

After I had been in confinement ten weeks, came on my first examination. On the 3rd day of January, anno 1558, reckoning the beginning of the year from new year's day, the gaoler came to me, saying that I must appear before the commissary to be examined touching my faith. I was glad, soon got ready, and went with the

gaoler. Coming into the hall where the commissary was sitting, I humbly saluted him; he returned my salutation, using these words, "Is your name Jaques d'Auchy?"

Jaques. "It is, sir."

Commis. "Jaques, I have been deputed on the part of the king and the procureur-general, to hear you upon the articles of faith."

Jaques. "Well, sir, let it be done in the name of the Lord."

After much conversation concerning the faith, he began to ask me where I was born, my way of life, residence, and conversation, from my youth up to the present time, all which I confessed to him. I was then led back into the keeper's house.

The next day, namely the 4th of January, I was again led in the afternoon before the same commissary. He began to defame, revile, and blaspheme the shepherds and flock of Christ, saying, "Is it not a lamentable thing that we suffer ourselves to be so led astray?"

Jaques. "Yes, sir."

Commis. "I speak of you people, and many others, who forsake our mother the holy church, and suffer yourselves to be deceived by a troop of idle fellows and vagrants."

Jaques. "I have not permitted myself to be deceived by such men."

Commis. "No? If you believe such cursed villainous fellows and beggars as Menno, Leonard, Hendrick van Vreden, Frans de Kuijper, Jelis van Aken, and such-like rascals, and forsake us and the true word of God, do you not suffer yourself to be deceived?"

Jaques. "I have not forsaken the word of God, for my faith is founded upon the word of God, and not on men, nor on the doctrines of men; for the prophet Jeremiah exclaims, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.*"

Jer. xvii 5.

A little afterwards he cried out, "Oh! those wicked men, Menno and Leonard, how many people have they deceived, and led to the devil and destruction!"

Jaques. "Sir, I entreat you not to use such words, for it would be hard to prove that they are what you call them. They have not deceived any, but have clearly taught the word of God. I do not believe that those who have faith in the word of God will go into condemnation; however, the Lord will judge."

Commis. "I will not dispute; for I myself submit to be instructed by those who are learned in holy church; but I know well what you people are, and what your doctrine is. If you had the power, you would soon cut our throats, as was done by your people at Munster, at Amsterdam, [214] and other places."

Jaques. "O, sir, do not use such expressions against your conscience; for I believe you know much better, having been a member of the council for twenty years as you say (this he had told me before), therefore I think that you must know us better. Had we such wicked hearts as to wish to murder people, we should not give ourselves over into your hands; for, if we would only speak against our consciences, and conceal the truth from you, you would have no power over us, since you will not find one that can, with truth, complain of us as having unjustly treated or injured any one."

Commis. "From whence then come so many heresies and sects? Where do so many uproars and mutinies spring from?"

Jaques. "As regards the sects and heresies in the world, such as those of Munster or Amsterdam, or elsewhere, we have no kind of fellowship with them, nor have we any part in such people's works, nor with their doctrines; we hold their doctrines to be devilish; moreover, these things cannot prevent the truth from being the

truth, and Christians from being true Christians, no more than all the sects and heresies that encompassed the apostles in their day, which had some show of being the word of God."

After these and many other words which we had together, he began to soften, and said to me, "You must not study such high things, but permit yourself to be taught by men wiser and more learned than yourself; you must believe the word of God."

Jaques. "O, sir, could I hesitate to believe the word of God? For that very word I am now in prison. I stand here present before you to answer for it."

Commis. "You are not imprisoned for the word of God, but for your evil deeds."

Jaques. "Sir, have you heard of any one that has accused me of having in any way wronged or injured him?"

Commis. "No, I have not heard that any one has made any complaint against you."

1 Pet. iv. 5. *Jaques.* "The Lord be praised that it is not for any unrighteousness, but for the testimony of the true faith?"

Commis. "Not so; it is for the evil deeds that you have committed against his imperial majesty, and for having transgressed the command of the king our lord."

Jaques. "If I have transgressed the king's command, that is a small matter, if in so doing I have fulfilled the

Rev. xix. 1^c. command of the King who is the true God, and the everlasting King."

Commis. "You have also transgressed the command of God, and of our mother the holy church."

Jaques. "Sir, you cannot prove, from the holy scriptures, that I have transgressed the command of God."

Commis. "It shall by and by be proved to you. But let us now complete the articles about which I am directed to examine you."

We had many more discussions, which it would be too long to relate here; and besides they have somewhat escaped my memory. The commissary was in some measure satisfied, and heard attentively what I had to say.

Afterwards he began to ask me when I came to Embden, and what place I had pitched upon for my dwelling, and if I had any directions to such people. I answered, "Yes, I had."

Commis. "From whom did you receive those directions?"

Jaques. "From a kind friend."

Commis. "In what house were you?"

Jaques. "I do not know the house that I was in."

Commis. "Who was it that brought you; Leonard?"

Jaques. "The company consisted of men and boys, women and girls."

Commis. "What were their names?"

Jaques. "I should have had much to do to know their names, as I had not any long time to learn them."

Commis. "When you came into the house, where was Leonard; what did he preach about?"

Jaques. "He preached the pure word of God."

Commis. "From what and upon what articles did he preach?"

Jaques. "He taught amendment of life, the putting off the old man, and putting on the new; showing powerfully from the scripture that they who walk in sensuality, after the flesh, have no part in the kingdom of God." Matt. iii. 2. Col. iii. 9. Rom. viii. 13. Eph. v. 5.

Commis. "Did he not speak of any other matters?"

Jaques. "Sir, I should have much to do to remember everything he said, just as I suppose it would be with trouble and labour that you would remember a sermon that was delivered more than eighteen months or two years ago."

Commis. "Did you then receive your second baptism?"

Jaques. "I have been baptized but once, and that ac-
Matt. xxviii. 19. cording to the ordinance of Christ."

Commis. "Were you not baptized in your infancy?"

Jaques. "I know nothing of what was done to me in my infancy, and I have no memorial of it?"

Commis. "Did not your father or mother tell you that you were baptized; and had you no godfathers or godmothers?"

Jaques. "I believe they told me of it, and I have called some persons godfather and godmother, but that was not
[215] according to the scripture."

Commis. "Well, was not that enough? Did you receive anything more than that from Leonard, viz. water, or baptism, according to your notion?"

Mark xvi. 15. *Jaques.* "I received from him baptism according to the word of God."

Commis. "Do you not consider the baptism you received in your infancy to be good?"

Jaques. "Had I thought it good, and to be baptism, I should have received no other; for it is written that there
Eph. iv. 5. is *one Lord, one faith,* and *one baptism,* and not many baptisms."

Commis. "Did you receive the baptism, administered by Leonard, in the house where you were assembled?"

Jaques. "Yes."

Commis. "Was it after the sermon, or before?"

Jaques. "After the sermon."

Commis. "Did he not speak of baptism?"

Jaques. "Yes, he did, and showed from holy scripture what it was, and what baptism signified; humbly exhort-
Rom. vi. 3. ing those that desired to receive the same carefully to observe and pay regard to what they received, proving
2 Tim. iii. 12. that the cross and persecution awaited those that have

attained so far, and many other proofs from holy scripture."

Commis. "Were you not afraid of the emperor's proclamation?"

Jaques. "No; nor am I now."

Commis. "Jaques, it will go hard with you for your evil deeds, except you throw yourself upon his clemency."

Jaques. "Sir, I expect mercy from the Lord, but I know not that I have committed any fault against the emperor or the king for which I should seek mercy; if that proclamation be contrary to the word of God, I do not think that I commit any fault against any person whatever in fulfilling the command of God." Psa. cxxx. 7.

Commis. "Jaques, Jaques, think on the contents of the proclamation."

Jaques. "Sir, I know well that it has authority above the word of God in this world to order to be put to death those that believe on his name, and who depart from unrighteousness; as it is written, that so it should come to pass; but what will it signify, when you have dealt with me according to that proclamation, and have put me to death, you will have nothing but a vile and mortal body, subject to corruption, but the soul you cannot touch; and when you come before the judgment seat of God, you will know what you have done." Isa. lix. 15. Matt x. 17. Matt x. 28. Wisd. v. 2.

Commis. "I do not seek your death, God knows; and I should be sorry for you to suffer the least pain, even at the extremity of your finger."

Jaques. "The event will show; but how comes it to pass that you shed innocent blood, seeing you cannot understand this faith, as you yourself have told me; why do you not rather ordain that they who cannot regard your faith as right and good, should go into exile, preserving their lives and property? as is done throughout Germany and in the east, where they will not sit in

judgment on the word of God for the purpose of shedding blood."

After many more observations, he asked, "What do you believe concerning the sacrament of the altar?"

Jaques. "Do you refer to the breaking of bread?"

Commis. "Yes."

Matt. xxvi. 26. Acts ii. 46. 1 Cor. xi. 23. *Jaques.* "I believe what Christ ordained, and the apostles practised; and what Paul writes concerning it to the Corinthians."

Commis. "How do you understand it?"

Jaques. "Just as it is written, I wish not to put any gloss upon the word of God." With that he was satisfied, and noted it upon his paper.

Commis. "What do you think of the mass, of confession, and of the priests' absolution."

Jaques. "With respect to the mass, it is unknown to me, and also to the scriptures. I have not met with the word in the word of God."

Commis. "What then would you have me write?"

Jaques. "I do not know; what you please, sir."

Commis. "Will you not simply confess that you believe in the ordinances of the true and holy church, as the scripture teaches, and as a good Christian is bound to do?"

Jaques. "Yes, sir, with all my heart." He wrote accordingly.

Commis. "Who were your teachers in these doctrines? whom did you at first associate with, and in what place?"

Jaques. "I conversed much on the scriptures with many persons at Antwerp; but I was more particularly instructed, and obtained my principles from the perusal of the holy word of the Lord." He wrote this down.

Commis. "But now, with regard to an important point; were you not a minister, or deacon over the poor, or an exhorter; had you not some office in the assemblies of the brethren?"

It was thus written in the paper before him, as well as I was able to observe. I did not at first know what he would say on this important matter; and I replied, "No, nor do I think myself qualified for office; I am but a weak member in the congregation." 1 Cor. xii. 17.

Commis. "Were you not present at the meetings before your baptism?"

Jaques. "Yes, twice or thrice at least."

Commis. "In what place was it, and in what sort of house?"

Jaques. "As to the houses, I do not know whose they are."

Commis. "What sort of houses were they, large or small?"

Jaques. "We assemble where we best can, according to circumstances; I remember to have been in very poor small houses, more like stables than houses." This he wrote in his paper.

Commis. "Were you with the brethren, at the exhortation, after your baptism?"

Jaques. "Sir, that speaks for itself: you may well [216] suppose, that if I was there before, I should be there more frequently afterwards." Heb. x. 25. Acts xv. 6.

Commis. "Is your wife of the same opinion as you? Is she also baptized?"

Jaques. "It is enough to answer for myself, without answering for my wife; if she were here, she would answer for herself: I consider her, however, a woman that fears the Lord." With this he was satisfied.

On the eighth day of January of the aforesaid year 1558, on a Saturday morning, I was led into the same hall before the inquisitor, who, a short time before, was deputed by the king of Spain, with full powers to bind or loose, to set free, or to put to death. When I came before him, I humbly saluted him. He returned my

salutation, saying, "Jaques, I am exceedingly glad of one thing, that is, of what the procureur-general has told me, that you are very willing to confess your fault, if it can be proved to you from scripture that you have transgressed the command of God, and that you are in error. Is that still your intention? Will you accept scripture?"

Jaques. "Yes; I am ready to listen to good instruction that agrees with the word of God." My confession to the commissary was before him.

And he asked, "Do you still confess that you were baptized by Leonard?"

Matt. v. 37. *Jaques.* "My word is not yea and nay; but yea, yea. What I confessed before, I confess still, openly."

Inq. "Was not the baptism you received in your infancy sufficient for you, without receiving another?"

Jaques. "The baptism I received in my infancy I consider to be no baptism, according to the word and ordinance of God?"

Inq. "This I will prove to you; but do you believe that little children are born in original sin?"

Psa. li. 5. *Jaques.* "David rightly says, that he was conceived in
Rom. iv. 25. sin, as all infants are; but sin is not imputed to them, for Christ died to put away sin, which Paul every where
Rom. v. 18. testifies in his epistles. As sin came into the world by one man, and death by sin, so grace has abounded through Jesus Christ."

Inq. "How are infants cleansed? Is it not by baptism?"

Heb. ix. 14. *Jaques.* "They are cleansed by the blood of Christ,
John i. 29. forasmuch as he is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Inq. "In what way are they cleansed from original sin?"

Jaques. "Sir, I have already told you that it is through

the blood of the Son of God, who died for us when we were yet enemies and unbelieving."

Inq. "Do you not believe that infants bear their sin from Adam, until they are cleansed by baptism?" Rom v. 6.

Jaques. "That must be proved to me from scripture. I believe the word of the prophet, who says, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; but the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*" Ezek. xviii. 20.

Inq. "It is not to be understood so; but the child is impure until it has received baptism."

Jaques. "Are the children cleansed by the outward sign of water?"

Inq. "No, but they must first be cleansed by the water, and then by the Holy Ghost."

Jaques. "Which washing goes first, the external or the internal?"

Inq. "The external washing, and after the words, 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' are spoken, they are cleansed internally."

Jaques. "Sir, you say that, without scripture. Christ says, they are hypocrites who first cleanse the outside; but we must first cleanse the inside and the outside will then be clean." Matt. xxiii. 25.

Inq. "You err, and do not understand the scripture. You have suffered yourself to be deceived by a set of vagabonds."

Jaques. "Sir, I trust not in men, but it is not given me to understand otherwise; men cannot give me faith; for it is written in the prophets, *They shall be all taught of God.* And Jesus Christ says, *No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.* But now, sir, only show me by the scripture that the baptism of little children is a plant, an ordinance of God, and practised by the apostles, and I will believe it." Isa. liv. 13. John vi. 65.

Inq. "The ordinance was instituted by Jesus Christ,
John iii. 5. saying, *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*"

Jaques. "Christ does not speak to children, but to a teacher of the law; nor does he speak of little children, newly born; for Christ afterwards says in the same chapter, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit: marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again; the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*"

After I had read this in his Testament, in German, printed at Zurich,[f] I said, "Sir, if the outward baptism of children is a new birth, it is then well known from whence
[217] it comes, for we see it with our eyes."

Inq. "How do you understand it then?"

Jaques. "I understand that the new birth takes place
Col. iii. 5. in those who were in the old Adam, in the flesh and sin, which must be put off and put to death, the flesh and sin being crucified with all its desires and lusts, that they may
Rom. vi. 4. be born again to a newness of life after the new man Christ Jesus, as Paul largely testifies."

Inq. "That is to be understood of adult and aged persons; but little children who are impure must be cleansed with water, in order to obtain salvation."

Jaques. "What do you believe concerning infants that are not baptized according to your faith, which you receive from the pope?"

Inq. "They go where the devils are."

Deut. i. 16. *Jaques.* "Oh, sir, it is written, when ye judge, judge
Matt. vii. 2. righteous judgment; also, *with what judgment ye judge, ye*

[f] [Doubtless the German-Swiss version of Leo Jude, which differs much from Luther's version. It first appeared between the years 1525 and 1529. Horne's Introd. ii. part 2. p. 95.]

shall be judged. You condemn innocent children, while Christ saith, *Of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" Matt. xviii. 3. Matt. xix. 14.

Inq. "They were baptized, or at least had been circumcised, which was to them instead of baptism."

Jaques. "The scripture makes no mention of their having been circumcised, and you cannot prove whether they were Jewish or heathen children."

Inq. "They were all Jews that were in Jerusalem and in the land of Judea."

Jaques. "Luke says differently, Acts ii. that in Jerusalem, in the land of Judea, there were all kinds of tongues, out of every nation under heaven." Acts ii. 5.

Inq. "Is it not a lamentable thing that you so err in the scripture? Does not Paul say that he hath cleansed the church with the washing of water?"

Jaques. "Paul says, *With the washing of water by the word.* Can you then cleanse children by the word, or with the washing of water only? for they cannot believe the word." Eph. v. 26. John xv. 3.

Inq. "They are then condemned, since they do not believe."

Jaques. "Say not so; for they are innocent and poor in spirit, and of such is the kingdom of heaven." He replied as he had done before, "They must above all things be cleansed by the baptism of water, to obtain salvation." Matt. v. 3.

Jaques. "The apostle Peter testifies distinctly that as the ark which Noah had prepared preserved from death, and from the wrath of God, all those that had renounced the world and the communion of the wicked, and had entered therein, in the same manner doth baptism save us; but the apostle esteems not that baptism to be of any value that puts away the filth of the flesh, unless there be the answer of a good conscience toward God. I do not believe that little children have that answer of a good conscience, seeing they know not what is good or evil." 1 Pet. iii. 21. Deut. i. 39.

On this point he made me no answer, but looked steadfastly at me, and a little afterwards said, "It is Calvin who writes, the attestation (that is witness) of a good conscience. These are the false prophets that deceive you. The genuine text does not say so."

Jaques. "I am not in prison for the doctrine of Calvin." I requested him several times to allow me to read in his book what the apostle wrote, namely, in his own Testament that he had before him, or in his Latin Bible which was of a very small size, translated and printed by Robert Stephen, at Paris; but, notwithstanding my earnest entreaties, he would not let me. I said to him, "Sir, since you contradict the word, you ought not to hinder me from referring to it."

After some further conversation, he said to me, "Since you will not believe the holy teachers, as St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, and a number of other saints that he named, nor the ordinances that the holy church has instituted, what will you believe?"

Jaques. "I believe alone in the ordinance of Christ. Show me that the apostles baptized little children and I will believe it." This he attempted to prove from the households that were baptized; in which, as he said, there may have been little children. I answered, "While the scripture says nothing about little children being in them, it clearly testifies that these households heard the word,
Acts xvi. 32. and believed, as is written of the gaoler; also of Cor-
Acts x. 47. nelius, the centurion, with all those of his household who received the Holy Ghost, as the apostles had done, viz., they who heard the word. Therefore, sir, you cannot prove that little children were amongst them."

Inq. "I will not insist upon this, and affirm that there were or that there were not, for that is doubtful; but you should believe what the fathers and holy teachers have ordained in the church, and have practised to the present day."

Jaques. "Did those teachers institute this ordinance with a good intention, or because it was an ordinance of God contained in the scripture?"

Inq. "They did it according to the word of God and with a good intention."

Jaques. "Sir, you know well how strictly it was commanded the people of Israel that they should do nothing after their own will, but only what the Lord commanded and ordained. Saul was rejected of God, because he did not obey the word of the Lord that had been declared to him; but had done as he thought proper." Deut. iv. 2. [-18] 1 Sam. xv. 22.

After many other words had passed between us, he left me, saying, "Jaques, I entreat you to consider the matter carefully, for you are in error and deceived."

Jaques. "I am not in error, nor deceived; I am well advised; and since you cannot show me from the scripture that infant baptism is an ordinance of God, I therefore do not believe it."

Inq. "What would you have me show you, since you neither believe the holy doctors of the Catholic church, nor yet her ordinances?"

Jaques. "Sir, it is written, *Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.*" Matt. xv. 13. After many other words he left me saying, "Adieu, Jaques; reflect and pray earnestly to God." I likewise said, "Adieu," and that I indeed hoped ever to call upon the name of the Lord for his aid. Psa. cxvi. 6.

Much more passed between us which I have not written, because I do not distinctly remember it, having been since attacked with fever. I have forgotten to write down his allegation, by which he attempted to prove that circumcision was a figure of baptism, and that it should be used in the same manner; in reply to which I showed him from the scripture that circumcision was a type of the covenant, and served only to show who were included in Gen. xvii. 11.

the covenant, and the children to whom the promises
Rom. ii. 28. belonged. But Paul informs us that now he is not a Jew, nor a child of Abraham, that is one outwardly, or of his seed according to the flesh; but they that are such in
John viii. 39. heart, as Christ saith that they are Abraham's children, who do the works of Abraham, although they are Gentiles according to the flesh. I also showed him that baptism is
John iii. 5. a sign of the true second birth, as Christ declared to
Rom. vi. 5. Nicodemus, the putting off of the old man by a new life, and that therefore men must be born again, and not merely a newly born infant, as they would have it; and that where there was no new birth, there no sign was of any use: it were but mocking God. He rejoined, "Have little children, then, no part in this sacrament?" I said
Matt. xiii. 13. that the sacraments were left us to be used in the church by those that had ears to hear, and hearts to understand and to discern the sacraments, and not for the ignorant. We had much more discourse on this article, and I showed him the abuse of baptism, as practised by them, was contrary to the scriptures. I referred also to the baptism administered by midwives, which they esteem valid, and yet baptize again; therefore, I said, *they* were the Anabaptists.

On Monday, the 10th January of the same year, I was taken again before the same inquisitor; after some remarks he inquired, "What have you determined with regard to baptism?"

Jaques. "I have no other view than what I gave you, since you cannot show me from the scripture that the baptism of little children is an ordinance of Christ; I do not believe, therefore, in it, but adhere to the baptism that
Matt. xxviii. 19. Jesus Christ instituted, and commanded his apostles to observe."

Inq. "False prophets have thus taught you, concerning whom the scripture saith that they shall come, and that they have gone out from among us."

Jaques. "The Lord saith that such false prophets shall be known by their fruits; and with regard to your saying that they have gone out from among you, Paul being at Miletus, showed the elders of Ephesus that, of their own selves and among the flock, men should arise teaching perverse things. Is it not so, sir?" Matt. vii. 15. Acts xx. 29.

Inq. "Yes, it is."

Jaques. "Is not, then, the baptism you practise a perverse thing, sir, and a contradiction of scripture? Has not Christ commanded those that believe to be baptized, those who were taught and had learned? The apostles baptized only those that received the word, while you baptize only those that do not believe, and cannot be instructed, nor taught, nor can receive the word, for they are incapable. Methinks, that is a perversion, a setting the cart before the horse." Mark xvi. 15. Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts iii. 19.

Inq. "It is, because you are in heresy, my son, and do not believe the holy doctors; you will see soon how it will go with you. But now let us speak upon another article." After he had looked over and read the confession I had made before the commissary, as I related before, he asked me, "What do you believe concerning the eucharist?"

Jaques. "What is that?"

Inq. "The sacrament of the altar."

Jaques. "Do you mean the Lord's supper, or the breaking of bread?"

Ingr. "Yes, it is the same thing; the eucharist, the sacrament, or Lord's supper."

Jaques. "Sir, it is not the same name; for observe how the apostles have termed it: Luke says they brake bread from house to house; he says not the body of Christ?" Acts ii. 46.

Inq. "That of which Luke there speaks is the word of [210] God, which they imparted to one another."

Jaques. "So, sir, says David Joris[g] and other heretics, who do away with the breaking of bread; but observe
Acts xx. 9. when Paul was at Troas, and the assembly were met together at night, and a young man fell from the third loft, Luke says that Paul, continuing his speech until midnight, the young man having fallen into a deep sleep fell from the window; when they were come up again, Paul, having restored him, they broke bread and ate. It was not the word that they ate, for Paul afterwards spoke until break of day and then departed." The inquisitor hearing this looked hard at me, and knew not what to say. "Do you not believe," said he, "that when the priest has spoken the words, our Lord is in the bread, his flesh and blood, just as the Jews had him in their hands and crucified him?" He asked me the same thing repeatedly, and as I did not wish to dispute with him, I said: "Sir, if you can prove it from the scriptures, I will then believe it." He urged me, saying, "Say no, or yes; what is it you believe?"

Jaques. "I believe as the scripture testifies concerning it."

Inq. "I ask you if you do not believe that he is in the sacrament, his flesh and blood, even as he was on the cross?" Perceiving that he was getting angry, I delayed a little to answer. "Well, what do you say?"

Jaques. "No, sir."

Inq. "That I hear, but why did you delay so long to answer yes or no?"

Prov. xvii. 27. James i. 19. *Jaques.* "Sir, it is written, *Be swift to hear, slow to speak.*"

Inq. "Well then, Jaques, say only yes or no; if you believe that he is there bodily in the bread, say yes."

[g] [See note, vol. i. p. 264.]

Jaques. "If, sir, I answered yes, how could I prove it you from the scripture that he is there in flesh and blood, after the priest has pronounced the words; for I have never read it in the scripture? and, because I cannot prove it, therefore I will not say that it is so."

Inq. "So, then, you do not believe it, that I hear plainly: is it not so?"

Jaques. "I believe concerning it no further than the scriptures testify; how can he be there in the bread, sir, since it is written that he is ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of his Father till he make his foes his footstool." Mark xvi 19. Acts ii. 34, 35.

Inq. "Do you not believe that he is of power sufficient to sit at the right of his Father, and also to be in the bread?"

Jaques. "Sir, I believe that he is almighty, but he can do nothing contrary to his word, for he must be true; he is the truth itself. John xiv. 6.

Inq. "Will you not believe the scripture that is written: *Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;* do you not then believe that it is his body?" Matt. xxvi. 26. Luke xxii. 19.

Jaques. "Which do you hold to be his body? that which was delivered up for us, and suffered, which sat at the table and spake; or that which he held in his hand, namely, the bread? Was that delivered for us? Did that bread die on the cross for our sins? Did not that bread represent his body?"

Inq. "Both."

Jaques. "I have never read that there are two Christs, but the one only Son of God." This I had repeatedly told him before. Matt. xvi. 16.

Inq. "These two are but one; the wine is likewise his blood, after the words are spoken by the priest."

Jaques. "Does the wine become his blood after the words are spoken? Does it always remain blood, and not wine?"

Inq. "After the words are spoken, the bread is the real flesh, and the wine is the real blood of Christ; and they remain flesh and blood."

Jaques. "What, then, did Christ give his disciples to understand, when He said, *This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins; but I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine.* Sir, Christ calls it his blood of the new testament, and, nevertheless, he gives his apostles to understand that it is still fruit of the vine; for he styles it such after he had called it his blood."

Matt. xxvi. 23.

Inq. "Where is that written?" I then took the German Testament, which he had before him, and read it to him. After I had shown and read it to him, he said to me, "You must not be guided by your own understanding, but by the explanations of the holy doctors, by St. Augustine, Ambrose, and others of the ancient church."

Jaques. "I am well content with the explanations of Paul, without seeking other explanations."

Inq. "Where has Paul explained the sacrament of the altar?"

Jaques. "Paul has explained, and declared to the Corinthians what the supper of the Lord, and the breaking of bread, is."

Inq. "Show it me." I had still his Testament, and read to him the tenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, where Paul says, *I speak as to wise men, judge* [220] *ye what I say: the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* I had scarcely read it, before he hastily replied, "That is against you; for the apostle there plainly shows that there is flesh and blood in the bread and wine, and that we partake of the body of Christ."

1 Cor. x. 15.

Jaques. "If you please, sir, let me read further, and you will perceive that Paul does not intend us to understand it of the body of Christ, his flesh and blood as it hung on the cross, but of his church, which is his body; for, when he says that we have communion with, and are partakers of the body of Christ, he says, *for we, being many, are one bread, one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.*" 1 Cor. x. 17.

Inq. "The apostle there speaks of another body, namely, of his church."

Jaques. "I do not find that Paul makes any difference or distinction between two bodies, but speaks of one body of Christ."

Inq. "How then do you understand eating his body, and drinking his blood?"

Jaques. "Just as Paul gives us to understand, that it is one communion or participation of the body of Christ." 1 Cor x. 18.

Inq. "My son, how is it you are so deceived? do you understand then that, through the communion you can indeed partake of the body and blood of Christ, without eating and drinking thereof?"

Jaques. "Sir, I am not deceived; I rest upon the word of God."

Inq. "Well, what do you understand then by this communion?"

Jaques. "The apostle explains it, when he says in the same chapter, "*Behold, Israel after the flesh; are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?* Observe, sir, the simile that Paul gives by which to understand that of the Corinthians; do you not understand it, sir?" 1 Cor. x. 18.

Inq. "Yes, I do."

Jaques. "Your meaning is not, I think, that they who were partakers of the altar, did therefore eat the altar, but only the sacrifices that lay upon the altar."

Inq. "Do you think it is the same with the sacrament?"

Jaques. "Sir, I think that when we eat the bread, we thereby signify our partaking of the body of Christ; nevertheless we eat only the bread, and not Christ; just as Israel did not eat the altar, but only the sacrifices; yet in eating the sacrifices, they signified that they were partakers of the altar."

Looking at me very sharply, he said, "What an error! and do you not believe that, in eating the consecrated bread, we eat the body of Christ?"

Jaques. "Paul does not give us to understand it so; and I do not so understand it."

Inq. "Is it not, Jaques, a lamentable thing, that you do not believe the word of God; which says, *This is my body: this is my blood; do this in remembrance of me?*"

Jaques. "I believe the word of God. Christ would have us to understand, that he is not there bodily; since
Luke xxii. 19. he said, that we should do it in remembrance of him.
1 Cor. xi. 23. Paul likewise says, *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink*
1 Cor xi. 26. *this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.*" He is then not there bodily, since he is not yet come."

Inq. "He is there bodily, according to the word of Christ; and all the holy doctors so interpret it."

Jaques. "I prefer Paul alone above all other doctors, and abide by Paul's interpretation only."

Inq. "You ought also to believe the holy doctors of the catholic church."

Jaques. "I believe the holy scriptures, and the word of God alone."

Inq. "If, then, you believe the word of God, you must also believe that when the bread is consecrated, and the words are pronounced, he who corporeally receives it, receives the body and blood of Christ, since Christ so declares; and he lies not, but is the truth."

Jaques. "I know very well that Christ is the truth, but
John vi. 51. we must understand how he speaks when he says, *I am the*

living bread which came down from heaven, and the bread that I will give is my flesh; do you indeed believe that?"

Inq. "No, I do not; do you believe it?"

Jaques. "I do not say that, nor will we now dispute about it; it is mentioned only because you say we must believe what Christ says. Observe, he says, *I am the vine, my Father the husbandman.* Paul also says, *That rock,* of which the children of Israel drank, *was Christ.*" John x. 1. 1 Cor. x. 4.

Inq. "No, no, we must not so take every expression, but only as a type of Christ."

Jaques. "But we have here the same manner of expression?"

Inq. "True, but this is a sacrament, which is left us as a remembrance of the body of Christ."

Jaques. "Sir, observe Israel after the flesh; the lamb they ate was called the passover, an everlasting remembrance that they were brought out, by the strong hand of God, from Egypt, from the house of bondage. So, the bread that we break is in remembrance of Christ, who redeemed us from sin and everlasting death, releasing us from the bondage of our enemy the devil." Exod. xii. 3, 4.

Inq. "Yes, according to the opinion of your shepherds, Calvin, and Zwingle, and such like heretics, who have introduced new doctrines; while we have been in this faith more than fourteen hundred years. Why do you not believe us?"

Jaques. "Sir, ought I to believe on account of length of time? there have been many heretics, as the Sadducees, Nicolaitanes, heathens, and many others, who have erred much longer. Read the scriptures alone, after the example of the good king Josiah." [221] 2 Kings xxii. 11.

Inq. "Do you think so, my son? no, no."

Jaques. "Sir, so said the children of Israel to Jeremiah, and yet they were in error. You also know how they abused the grace of God, making a golden calf, and Jer. xviii. 18. Exod. xxxii. 4.

worshipping it, and saying, *These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.* In like manner, you people say now of the bread, 'It is Christ who died for us.'"

He became angry, and inquired, "Do we commit idolatry in worshipping Christ?"

Jaques. "No; if he be in the bread; but if he is not there, what else is it that you do?"

Inq. "Well, what is it, then, that you believe concerning it? Say only this one word, yes or no."

Jaques. "Sir, you have heard that I believe that he
Acts vii. 55. sits at the right hand of his Father in heaven."

Inq. "And in the bread?"

Jaques. "Sir, I have told you that I believe concerning
1 Cor. x. 16. it even as Paul testifies."

Inq. "I perceive, indeed, that you do not believe that men eat the holy flesh of Christ sacramentally."

Jaques. "Do all that receive the bread receive also the body of Christ?"

Inq. "Yes, all, whoever they may be."

Jaques. "A robber, murderer, rogue, or one full of treachery, deceit and wickedness, having no compunction or sorrow for his sins, but willing still to live a wicked life, does such a man receive the body and blood of Christ?"

Inq. "Yes. Although he were the vilest person in the world; even were he a Turk or a heathen, if he came to the sacrament, he would receive the body and blood of Christ as well as another; yea, what is more, were it even a beast."

Jaques. "How is it possible, sir, that the unbelieving, the ungodly, and the unrighteous, who are threatened with eternal damnation, should receive the body and blood of Christ? It would then, of necessity, happen contrary to all scripture, whether God will or not, that they

would have eternal life, the beasts as well as men, because the Lord has promised, *That whosoever eateth his flesh, and drinketh his blood, hath everlasting life;* and thus the ungodly would be partakers of the body of Christ and of Belial, of light and of darkness. It is impossible, as Paul saith." John vi. 54. 2 Cor. vi. 15.

Inq. "How? Do you not understand what Paul says, That whosoever eats the body eateth judgment." 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Jaques. "Stop, do not violate scripture; for Paul says, *that bread*, not that body."

Inq. "Well; whosoever eats this body, or this bread, and drinks this cup unworthily, eateth damnation."

Jaques. "Sir; he who receives judgment is far from receiving the body of Christ; it is the sentence of death that he receives."

Inq. "Very well; you acknowledge, then, those words of Jesus Christ, who said, *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life.* You believe, then, that men may eat and drink him, as he saith?"

Jaques. "I believe the words of Jesus Christ; but not in the same manner as the Jews, who were offended at him, saying, *How can this man give us* his blood to drink, and *his flesh to eat?* Nor even his disciples." John vi. 52.

Inq. "That was because they did not well understand."

Jaques. "That, indeed, I believe; for if they had understood it aright, they would not have said that; and his disciples would not have left him for those words, as they did."

Inq. "Understand aright, my son; it was because they understood that his flesh must be roasted or boiled, like other flesh; but he spake of eating it sacramentally: the other eating would have been of little service. But do you not believe that we eat his flesh sacramentally? that it is a sacrament that he left us under the appearance of bread and wine, into which he transferred himself?"

Jaques. "He has, then, left behind him ceremonies which are of no use."

Inq. "How so?"

Jaques. "Because, sir, when his disciples grossly understood it as you and other people do, he said to them, John vi. 63. *The flesh profiteth nothing, it is the spirit that quickeneth; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.* If, then, we eat his flesh, what doth that profit?"

Inq. "That was because they did not properly understand it, as I told you before."

Jaques. "Sir, I readily believe that; for had they understood it aright, it would not have been necessary to inform them that it was his word that he meant."

Inq. "How do you understand it, then, that he spake of his word?"

Jaques. "Sir, I understand that he spake of his word, Matt. iv. 4. as it is written, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by the word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,* which alone makes us alive in God unto eternal life."

Inq. "See, now, how your misleaders have taught you their new doctrines."

Jaques. "My faith does not rest on men, but on the word of God."

Inq. "Why, then, will you not believe in accordance with your mother, the holy church, that after the words are pronounced the bread and wine are changed?"

Jaques. "Sir, I have told you; because no such things are written in the scriptures; for neither the bread nor the wine was changed that Christ gave."

[222] *Inq.* "Oh, it was though."

Matt. xxvi. 29. *Jaques.* "Sir, I have showed you that he called it the fruit of the vine, after the words had been spoken."

Inq. "Do you not then, believe, Jaques, that Jesus Christ is almighty? and that being almighty he could give his disciples his blood to drink?"

Jaques. "I know, sir, that he is almighty, and that he was also able to do it; but if he did it, sir, has he promised that you should do so too?" Eccl. i. 7.

Inq. "But is not Jesus Christ able to leave us that, as a testament, in his sacrament?"

Jaques. "Yes he is, sir, had he said so: for he had power over the wind and over devils, to change water into wine, and to render himself invisible, and in short, I believe that he is almighty over all things; but a sinful man has not such power." Matt. viii. 16. John ii. 9. Luke iv. 30.

Inq. "Not when he utters the same words of Christ?"

Jaques. "The power lies not in the words, that would be witchcraft. You might also say to the sick, 'Be thou healed,' just as Christ said it, but it would not therefore come to pass." Matt. viii. 14.

Inq. "You do not believe, then, that Jesus Christ is in the bread, do you?"

Jaques. "Sir, you have plainly heard what I think; Christ has said that we should do it in remembrance of him. If he were there present, how could we do it in remembrance of him?"

Inq. "Oh! how those knaves, Zwingle and Calvin, have deceived you; those profaners of the sacrament, who pervert all the scripture."

Jaques. "My faith is not founded on the teaching of Calvin nor Zwingle."

Inq. "On what then?"

Jaques. "On the word of God, and on the foundation of the apostles." 1 Cor. iii. 11.

Inq. "How? You do not believe the word of God."

Jaques. "Sir, do I not believe the word of God? For that very cause I am here a prisoner, chained before you, to bear witness thereunto." Rev. xx. 4.

Inq. "My son, it is for the word of Satan, and not for the word of God."

Jaques. "Sir, be careful how you speak, that you do not blaspheme; for I have not received the words of Satan for my doctrine. I believe only the pure word of God; but you bring before me the words and interpretations of men."

Psa. xviii. 31.

Inq. "They are the words of the holy doctors of the church, which you reject; that is the cause of your error,"

Jaques. "I do not reject them, but I leave them just as they are, for I find matter enough in the word of God, to lay a good foundation; there are waters of life, a pure fountain, affording sufficient to drink, without running to brooks or pools, which are for the most part troubled and polluted."

1 Cor. iii. 11.
Jer. ii. 13.

Inq. "Well, we make no progress in this way, and it is now late; and since you will not believe as our mother the holy church teaches you, take heed and consider the matter; for you are in such error, that if you die in it, you will be damned with thousands of devils in the depths of hell."

Jaques. "Sir, it is written that judgment belongeth to God alone, why do you so boldly assume the place of God? God will judge me."

Matt. vii. 1.

Inq. "Jaques, that is a clear case, for you do not believe; now, *he that believeth not is damned,* saith Christ."

Jaques. "It is written, *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.* If I did not believe it, I would not bring forward the word of God in my defence."

Mark xvi. 16.
John vii. 24.

Inq. "All heretics do that. Pray earnestly to God that you may return to the holy church."

Jaques. "I hope, by the grace of God, that I am become a member of the true and holy church, which he hath cleansed and purchased with his own blood."

1 Cor. xii. 12.
Acts xx. 28.

Upon this he stood up and said to me, "Adieu, Jaques, mind that you act with due deliberation, for your time is

near; think well upon the matter." I also bade him farewell, and said that I was ready at all times to follow the guidance of holy scripture, as it might be made known to me.[h]

On Monday, the 1st day of February of the same year, [226] 1558, I was again brought before the same inquisitor. After a few words had been exchanged between us, he asked me, "Have you not prayed to the Lord for James i. 5. wisdom?"

Jaques. "Yes, and I have great need to pray to him Prov. i. 7. daily."

Inq. "Is your conscience at ease?" Luke. xviii. 1.

Jaques. "Quite so, the Lord be praised."

Inq. "What is your opinion now respecting baptism, and the sacrament, about which we have already spoken."

Jaques. "I am of the same opinion that I distinctly expressed before."

Inq. "Will you not believe differently?"

Jaques. "I am willing to do so, were it given me to understand it differently; but I will not speak deceitfully, against the convictions of my heart and conscience, for it is written, that the Holy Spirit flees from deceit." Wisd. i. 5.

Inq. "You have then, I presume, come to a final determination?"

Jaques. "Yes, until I am better instructed. But, do you mean, sir, that there is no other barrier between me and your church, than baptism and the sacrament?"

Inq. "What besides is there then that stands in your way?"

Jaques. "Many other ordinances and institutions of

[h] [Jaques was also examined on the 14th, 20th, and 27th January on the topics already mentioned. As the examinations contain no matter of special interest they are omitted.]

your church, of which I do not find one word in the holy scriptures."

Inq. "Yet, we have no ordinances nor institutions, which I cannot prove to you from the scriptures."

Jaques. "Where is the word mass found written? or purgatory? or prayers for the dead?"

Inq. "I will easily prove to you the truth of purgatory, and that we should pray for the dead."

Jaques. "Where is it written in the holy scriptures?"

Inq. "Will you receive the books of the Maccabees?"

Jaques. "Yes, truly, as apocryphal books."

Inq. "What does apocrypha mean?"

Jaques. "The ancients used this name to signify that they were not authentic books, from which a rule and ordinance could be derived."

Inq. "It is very true that the doctors found some difficulty therein; but you must not, on that account, reject them."

Jaques. "Yes sir; the reason why I cannot receive them, is not only that I will not confide in what men have said: but also, because I do not find that Christ or his apostles received them, or quoted any testimony out of them."

Inq. "Yes, yes; where do you find that Christ or his apostles quote from the books of Kings?"

Jaques. "Enough."

Inq. "Well, where?"

Jaques. "First, sir, it is written in Matthew, that the Pharisees reproved Christ, because his disciples plucked the ears of corn on the sabbath, and Christ answered them, *Have you not read what David did,*[1] *when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; how that he entered*

Matt. xii. 1, 3.

[1] [In 1 Sam. xxi. 5. In the Hebrew and ancient versions this book is called the first book of Kings.]

into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat? I say, therefore, that as Christ referred them to what was written in the books of the Kings, he thereby proves that he received them as good." [227]

Inq. "Well, do you find anything from the book of Joshua?"

Jaques. "Yes, sir."

Inq. "What is that?"

Jaques. "Sir, you know very well what James says in his Epistle, where he quotes a testimony or example from the book of Joshua, when he is speaking of Rahab, the harlot, who was saved by her works of faith." Josh. ii. 1.

Inq. "So then, you will not receive the books of the Maccabees, because Christ and his apostles have not quoted from them?"

Jaques. "No; and because they contain a doctrine which is contrary to all scripture, viz., that of sacrifices and prayers for the dead." Deut. xiii. 1.

Inq. "If I were disposed to take the trouble, I could easily prove all our ordinances from the scripture, as the mass, confession, the worship of images, invocation of saints, and others."

Jaques. "I do not think it, and besides, sir, were it even so, that we agreed in every article, still I should not be willing to join you, except you proved to me from the scriptures that it is Christian to shed innocent blood, as you do, on account of faith."

Inq. "It is on account of error."

Jaques. "Were it so, because we do not understand the scriptures aright, yet I do not find in scripture, that any one may be put to death on account of his faith."

Inq. "Oh! I will soon prove that heretics ought to be put to death; for it is written, that if a heretic or false prophet should arise, he should be put to death."

Jaques. "I have indeed read in the thirteenth chapter Deut. xiii. 1.

of Deuteronomy, that if there should arise a false prophet, or any other of that generation, who should teach them to go after other gods than they had known, the false prophet should be put to death, and be stoned with stones."

Inq. "Well, then, there is a testimony that heretics may be put to death."

Jaques. "Sir, we are no longer under the law, but under the gospel; and if we were under the law, we would not teach you to walk after other gods, than Him who made heaven and earth, and his Son Jesus Christ."

Psa. cxxiv. 8.

Inq. "You do it, notwithstanding, by your ordinances."

Jaques. "No man might be condemned to death, by the Israelites, on account of the different use of ceremonies, provided that he believed in the same God; but this is not to the purpose, because what is commanded in the law is not commanded in the gospel of Christ."

Inq. "Not? How so?"

Jaques. "Because, sir, in the law it was commanded, *An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth;* also, to love one's neighbour, and hate one's enemy; but by Christ just the contrary is commanded, not to resist evil, and to love our enemies."

Matt. v. 38. Lev. xxiv. 20. Lev. xix. 8.

Inq. "True; but he has not commanded that heretics should not be put to death."

Jaques. "What then, sir, is the meaning of Christ when he instructs us that men should not root out the tares that are among the wheat, lest, in rooting up the tares or bad ears, they should also root up the wheat? he therefore commands them to be left until the harvest; and the harvest is not yet come."

Matt. xiii. 30.

Inq. "You do not understand that aright; for it is easy to distinguish the wheat from the tares."

Jaques. "Yes, to them that have knowledge of seed."

Inq. "Yes, that is true."

Jaques. "Sir, it is written that the natural man knoweth

1 Cor. ii. 14.

only natural things; but the things that are spiritual knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

Inq. "That is very true."

Jaques. "Therefore, sir, I would like to ask you a question."

Inq. "What is that?"

Jaques. "Have you the Spirit of God; or has the council received the Spirit of God?"

Inq. "No, I will not answer that."

Jaques. "How then can you or the council judge of spiritual things? for the things of which we are speaking are spiritual, of which men must judge by the Spirit of God?"

Inq. "We judge you, because you have transgressed the command of the prince." 1 Cor. i. 5.

Jaques. "Had not his command been contrary to the command of God, I should not have transgressed it." Matt. vi. 24.

Inq. "It is not contrary to the command of God."

Jaques. "I would like you to show me from the scriptures, that the emperor's or the king's proclamation is just and righteous."

Inq. "I believe you think that all our fathers were deceived, and your sect alone is saved. What will you say? it is now twelve or thirteen hundred years since the emperor Theodosius issued a proclamation or edict, to put heretics to death, who at that time were re-baptized, like your sect."[k]

Jaques. "Yes, sir; you say that our sect has existed only twenty or thirty years; but it has been true in all

[k] [In the space of fifteen years Theodosius promulgated at least fifteen severe edicts against heretics. Heretical teachers were exposed to exile and confiscation. Religious meetings, by day or by night, in cities or in the country, were proscribed, and the building or ground where the assembly was held was forfeited. "The office of Inquisitor of the Faith, a name so deservedly abhorred, was first instituted under the reign of Theodosius." Gibbon's Decline and Fall, ch. xxvii.]

2 Tim. iii. 12. ages that they which will live godly in Christ Jesus have had to suffer persecution."

Inq. "So say all heretics."

Jaques. "Paul said it first of all, yet he was no heretic."

Inq. "I am well aware that he was no heretic, but [228] they all use the words of Paul. But I tell you, it is no new thing to issue proclamations and edicts, commanding heretics to be put to death; it has been so upwards of fourteen hundred years."

Jaques. "But it remains to be seen whether the emperor Theodosius, whom you have mentioned, did right, and performed any act that was pleasing in the sight of God, in issuing such an edict."

Inq. "Most assuredly, for he knew well that they were heretics."

Jaques. "Sir, in his opinion they were heretics; but in the opinion of those that laid down their lives for the testimony of their faith, he was himself a heretic and a tyrant."

Inq. "How do you know that?"

Jaques. "It speaks for itself; for they who put us to death for our faith are to be esteemed as no better than heretics and tyrants; and we may well suppose they were of a similar opinion who were put to death by the emperor 1 Cor. ii. 14. Theodosius. This matter cannot be judged of but by the Spirit of God."

Inq. "No, no; you ought not to think that so many learned doctors as there then were in the Catholic church would have allowed it, had it been wrong to put heretics to death."

Jaques. "I will not rely on the institutions or wisdom of men. I adhere to the teaching of Christ and his Matt. vii. 15. apostles, who continually admonish us to separate ourselves from false prophets, and to avoid heretics; but not Titus iii 10. pursue or persecute them to death."

Inq. "My son, do you know why they did not put them to death?"

Jaques. "In my judgment, because it was not pleasing to God."

Inq. "No, no, it was because they had not sufficient power, and had neither king, nor prince, nor magistrates."

Jaques. "Christ had power enough, he had at his command more than twelve legions of angels; and the apostles had power enough by the Holy Ghost; but they were called to be a flock, to be as sheep and lambs, harmless as doves; converted as children." Matt. xxvi. 53. Luke ix. 52. Matt. x. 16. Matt. xviii. 3.

Inq. "It is very true, that it was so at that time."

Jaques. "And must the children of God now, sir, be of a different nature from what they were then? ought they to have the nature of the wolf?"

Inq. "Certainly not; I do not say that."

Jaques. "Yet sir, it seems to me, that they who now boast of being the children of God have the true nature of devouring wolves." Zeph. iii. 3

He looked hard at me, and asked me, "Why do you think that?"

Jaques. "Because sir, Christ calls his people sheep and lambs; and it is the nature of a flock of sheep that when they see beasts approaching, and perceive a wolf among them, they will all take to flight, even if there were a thousand sheep to one wolf. They do not run and devour the wolf and shed his blood; but they who boast of being the flock of Christ do just the contrary; from whence do they then derive their nature?" John x. 27.

Inq. "The simile does not hold, it answers no purpose as a proof; the flock of Christ is not like a flock of sheep."

Perceiving that he rejected this, I asked him, "Must not the children of God be born of God, as John testifies? and must they not be of the same nature and disposition as their Father and Lord?" John i. 13.

Inq. "Yes; but why?"

Jaques. "Because it is written that the Son of God
Isa. liii. 7. was led as a lamb, or a sheep, to the slaughter, and
Acts viii. 32. opened not his mouth; his children then must be of the same nature and disposition, seeing they are born of God."

Inq. "So? That was appointed to come to pass."

Jaques. "Why?"

Inq. "That the scriptures might be fulfilled."

Jaques. "In like manner must the scriptures be fulfilled in his children."

Inq. "What scripture?"

John xv. 20. *Jaques.* "This: *If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. Remember the word that I said unto you: the servant is not greater than his Lord.*"

Inq. "He said that to his apostles."

Rom. xv. 4. *Jaques.* "I understand that he spake of all his children, and that the same is written for our learning."

Inq. "No, no, my son; you ought to know that the apostles were sent to proclaim and preach the gospel to every creature, and the Lord predicted that they would experience many sufferings, and be put to death; but after they had gained over a prince to the faith, then they would have rest, and might put the heretics in their country to death."

Jaques. "Sir, the scripture does not say that, nor am I able to comprehend how it can be the nature of a sheep to kill the wolf, and devour him; for your people say that you are the flock of Christ, and that we are devouring wolves, and you kill us; that does not seem to me right." Hereupon he asked me laughingly, "Jaques, was not Peter one of Christ's sheep?"

Jaques. "Sir, if he was chosen of God, he belonged to the flock."

Inq. "Answer, yes or no."

Jaques. "I not only believe that he was a sheep of Christ's flock, but also a shepherd."

Inq. "Well now, he that was a sheep killed two persons." Matt. x. 2. Acts v. 2.

Jaques. "Whom?"

Inq. "Ananias, and Sapphira his wife."

Jaques. "How did he kill them, since he had neither staff nor sword; was it not by the Spirit of the Lord?" [229]

Inq. "Nevertheless, he did it."

Jaques. "Sir, let not honour be given to men as if they could do it by their own power; they were struck dead by the Spirit of the Lord. Nor was it for the same cause that you now put people to death; it was because they lied to the Holy Ghost." Acts iii. 12. Acts v. 3.

Inq. "Well, Jaques, my son, this does not help us forward; consider well, and amend, and turn to the faith in which your parents believed, for you are in error. Believe, therefore, as a good Christian is bound to believe, without undertaking so many things."

Jaques. "*Faith,* says Paul, *is the gift of God.*" Eph. ii. 8.

Inq. "Yes, verily, it is the gift of God." Rom. xii. 3.

Jaques. "Men, then, cannot give it." 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

Inq. "Certainly not; we must pray to God for it."

Jaques. "How comes it, then, that men will force me to believe; threatening me with death?"

Inq. "They give you time to repent."

Jaques. "Sir, what time? Six, seven, or eight days, as I have seen in Brabant. Is that time sufficient to change so hastily one's faith?"

Inq. "I know not how it is in Brabant; but here they give them three times fourteen days at least, to consider whether they will be willing to believe when the word of God is held out to them."

Jaques. "Why do you say, sir, *if* they *will* believe? You speak as if they could of themselves believe, and yet you say that faith is the gift of God. The apostles had,

John i. 14. 1 Cor. i. 30. for two or three years, heard the Lord Jesus, full of wisdom and truth, and, nevertheless, they could not understand him, as you may see by the two disciples that were Luke xxiv. 25. going to Emmaus. Paul, also, had heard the apostles and Acts ix. 1. disciples, and yet he could not comprehend their doctrine, but threw them into prison. God revealed his will to them as it pleased him, and at such a time as he had appointed, and not at a time appointed by men."

Inq. "That was, because they had not before heard the like instruction; and, also, because it was in the beginning; therefore they could not understand."

John vi. 44. *Jaques.* "The reason was this: it was not given them, they had not been drawn of the Father. Why, then, do you not wait the time for God to do his will in us?"

Inq. "You have long heard it, more than enough; and you have still time given you for consideration. You have yet three weeks to deliberate from this day."

Jaques. "Sir, do you not mean, that after three weeks I shall be put to death?"

Inq. "You can, in the meantime, repent."

Jaques. "But if it is not given me to understand differently, and I cannot otherwise comprehend, how then shall I repent?"

Inq. "Why, for that reason time is given you, in order to see whether God will not have compassion on you, and convert you."

Jaques. "Sir, I am just thinking of the children of Judith vii. 1º. Israel, who were besieged in the city of Bethulia, and had no water. Their wives and children were perishing of thirst, and they said, 'There is no longer any hope for us in God; let us give up the city into the hands of the enemy.' So you say: there is no longer any hope of his Judith vii. 24. conversion; let us give him over to death. And as Ozias, governor of the city, thinking to give good counsel, said to the inhabitants, 'Let us yet endure five days, and if these

days pass, and there come no help unto us from the Lord, we will deliver up the city to the enemy. But, Sir, were they not sharply rebuked by a widow, named Judith, who said to the people, Who are ye that have tempted God this day, and stand in the place of God among the children of men, and desire to comprehend his counsel, &c.? Judith viii. 12.

Inq. "That is not like your case."

Jaques. "Sir, methinks it is the same, for you say, If no help come from God within the time that you appoint for us, we must then be given over to death, and, as you say, we are damned with all the devils."

Inq. "Jaques, there is no doubt of it."

Jaques. "How then, sir, do you think to escape the judgment of God, for sending us thus away to perdition? why do you not leave us to the last in the hands of God? for, as long as we live here, there may be hope of amendment, even after you think we are damned; but after death there is hope no longer." Matt. iii. 7.

Inq. "I do not drive you to perdition; it is not I that judge you, nor shall I be guilty of your death."

Jaques. Sir, when Susannah was unrighteously condemned to death, who bore the punishment, the judges, or the witnesses?"

Inq. "They who were guilty."

Jaques. "Sir, the judges were reproved by Daniel, but the witnesses were reproved and punished." Susan. xiii. 44.

Inq. "Do you mean that I am a witness in your matter? I am come here only to instruct you."

Jaques. "Nevertheless, sir, I consider you a principal witness; for on your testimony will the judges condemn me to death, or set me free. It is for this purpose you are sent here, and appointed by the king."

Inq. "I have no desire that they should condemn you on my testimony; nor will I judge you."

Jaques. "Sir, when the judges shall inquire of you

concerning me, what will you answer? will you not say that I am a heretic, and deserve to die?"

[230] *Inq.* "No, not I."

Jaques. "I pray you, sir, what will you say then?"

Inq. "That you are deceived, and have erred from the right way."

Jaques. "To be deceived, to err, or to be a heretic, sir, is, methinks, all the same thing."

Inq. "Well, my son, do not think that I am come here for that purpose, to sentence or condemn you to death; for you will be sentenced only on the confession that you made before the commissary. As for myself, I do not wish them to sentence you upon my word, I wish to have nothing to do with it."

Jaques. "Sir, for seven or eight years I assisted and practised in the council, and know well what avails there; but I say this for your instruction, that you may not stain your hands with my blood; for I know well on what account you have been deputed here." He then rose up and went away. Similar conversations we had repeatedly afterwards.

Jer. xxvi. 5

On Monday, the 7th of February, 1558, I was again summoned before the same inquisitor. On my appearance, he saluted me, and asked, "How are you going on? have you the fever still?"

Jaques. "I am going on well, the Lord be praised, and the fever has left me, three weeks or more ago."

Inq. "Is your conscience at rest?"

Jaques. "Quite so, to God be the praise." He then addressed me in a long speech, which is too long to be inserted here. In substance it was this, that he earnestly wished me to return to the holy Catholic church, and to believe, as it becomes a good Christian to believe, without prying into such high things, or wishing to be so wise, &c. To which I replied, "I search into nothing but what

it is permitted me to believe, and I am well content simply to believe what a good Christian is bound to believe."

Inq. "You say, indeed, that you will believe as a good Christian, yet you have the faith of a heretic." Syr. iii. 21.

Jaques. "Not so; my faith rests alone on the pure word of God. If you would be satisfied with the word of God, you would be satisfied with my faith."

Inq. "You quote, indeed, the word of God, but you are of another judgment in your heart." 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Jaques. "As we believe, so we speak; and seeing that we bring the scriptures before you, God's word, as the witness of our faith, why are you not satisfied? for it belongs to God alone to search the heart, and not to men." 2 Chron. vi. 30.

Inq. "What do you believe concerning Jesus Christ? whence did he take his flesh?"

Jaques. "Does the scripture instruct you to ask me that?"

Inq. "Because Menno says that he brought his flesh from heaven."

Jaques. "I have not heard him say so."

Inq. "He believes so."

Jaques. "The belief of Menno is[1] that *the Word was made flesh*, according to the testimony, John i.; or, as the text of your Testament is, *became flesh*."[m] John i. 14.

[1] [In 1552 Menno thus expressed his views on the person of Christ, in his answer to Gellius Faber:—Waerachtigh Godt ende mensche, mensche en Godt, Godt voor allen tijden van Godt, ende in Godt Godts eeuwige Woordt, ende in der tijdt, na der belofte den Vaderen geschiet, in Maria die zuyvere Jonckvrouwe —een ellendigh, lijdelijck, en sterflijck Mensche geworden,—door den Heyligen Geest van Godt in haer gezaeyt, door den geloove van haer ontfangen, in haer Maeghdelijck Lichaem gevoet, geneert, en tot bequamer tijdt een waerachtigh Mensche, gelijck Isaac uyt Sara. Opera, fol. 315, ed. 1681.]

[m] [German Version:—Das Wort ward Fleisch. Dutch: Het Woord is vleesch worden.]

Inq. "What do you believe concerning it?"

Matt xvi. 16. *Jaques.* "I believe that Christ is the Son of the living God."

Inq. "Where did he take his flesh?"

Heb. i. 2. *Jaques.* "I do not know; only that he was born of the Father."

Inq. "Do you not then believe that he took his flesh in the body of the Virgin Mary?"

Jaques. "If you can show me that Jesus Christ, or his apostles, constrained any one to confess that, I will also confess it to you. When Peter confessed Christ to be the Son of the living God, Christ did not ask him of whom he

Matt. xvi. 18. was made, but said that he would build his church upon

Acts viii. 37. this Rock. When the eunuch, under Candace, said to Philip that he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and desired on this belief to be baptized, Philip was satisfied without inquiring from whence he had taken his flesh."

Inq. "The inquiry was not needful at that time, as there was then no difficulty about it."

Jaques. "What need is there of it now?"

Inq. "Because there are so many heretics."

Jaques. "There were also plenty of heretics in the time of the apostles, but the reason that Satan always produces some vain dispute is to corrupt men's minds, and to lead them into error."

Inq. "Will you not, then, confess that he took his flesh and blood in the virgin?"

Prov. xxv. 27. *Jaques.* "I will not search into what is above my comprehension, viz. the origin of the humanity of the Son of

Matt. i. 20. God, for that was a marvellous work; but that you may not think I am a heretic, I confess him to be, in every respect, the Son of God, in power and might, in spirit, in flesh and blood, begotten of the proper substance of the one only Father, the eternal God, as the scripture testifies

to us; who from eternity was with the Father, and when the time of the promise was fulfilled, that eternal Word became flesh, was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary." Micah v. 2. Gal. iv. 4. John i. 14.

Inq. "He assumed his flesh and was made of our flesh; Concerning this will you not answer?" Isa. vii. 14. Matt. i. 29. Matt. ii. 1.

Jaques. "It is sufficient that I believe concerning it agreeably to the scripture, without further inquiry." [231]

Inq. "Does not the scripture say that he took upon him our flesh?"

Jaques. "I have never read it, and I wish to dispute no longer; you have also said that you will not dispute upon it; why do you now ask me so much about it?"

Inq. "The reason is that I may know whether your faith is the same as that of Menno Simons."

Jaques. "You have heard that I do not receive the testimony of man as the foundation of my faith."[n] John v. 34.

[The rest of the examination is occupied by a defence of separation from the church of Rome, on account of the unholy lives of its prelates, bishops, and priests. Jaques again and again affirms, and supports his affirmation by examples, the degrading sensuality and immoral lives of the clergy. The inquisitor simply meets the powerful arguments of the martyr by declaring the apostolicity of the holy Roman church; supporting the authority of its teachers by our Saviour's words, *The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works.* Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. The faith of Jaques remained unshaken; and after some

[n] [The inquisitor, by whom Jaques was examined, was Lindanus. He exercised the functions of inquisitor for Friesland with great severity. He became subsequently bishop of Ruremonde, and then of Ghent. His learning and zeal procured him the favour of the pope, Gregory XIII. He was the author of a large number of erudite works. Biograph. Universelle, xi. 303.]

discussion with others, who had crowded into the room, the inquisitor took his departure.][o]

[234] In addition to the above examinations, we will inform the reader how Jaques d'Auchy was betrayed and apprehended, and fell into the hands of the tyrants; and, also, the punishment that God, the righteous one, brought upon the traitor, as a memorable and instructive example to all tyrants and traitors.

There was at Harlingen a councillor named Heer de [235] Wael.[p] This person sought very diligently for Jaques; and, accosting him in a most friendly manner, invited him to his house, under the pretext that he had a letter for him. On Jaques' repairing thither, he bade him welcome; urged him, with much importunity, to be his guest, appearing, for old acquaintance' sake, to feel a strong attachment to him. Finding that Jaques could not re-
Psa. xli. 9. John xiii. 18. main, he desired him, with expressions of friendship (but with a Judas' heart) to come and bring his wares and manufactures; for Jaques travelled with wares, and it seemed as if he wished to buy something of him. In the meantime he sent, very secretly, a messenger to the council at Leeuwarden for a commissary and sergeant.
Matt. xxvi. 48. Jaques having returned, the man saluted him very kindly. Meanwhile the sergeant was fetched, and being come, the traitor malignantly said, "Seize him; that is the man!"
Prov. xii. 10. They attacked him very roughly, crying out, "Hold him fast," and searched him all over. Jaques then said, "Oh, sir, why have you thus betrayed me! I trusted my life,

[o] [The confessions recorded above were originally written in French, and afterwards translated into the Dutch language. By Winsemius, in his History of Friesland, the name of the martyr is spelt Jacobus Osius. Ten Cate Ges. der Doops. en Fries. p. 79.]

[p] [This name is written by Ten Cate—Antony del Vaille, and the date of the arrest is given as September, 1557. Gesch. der Doops. en Friesland, p. 78.]

and all my property in your hands; why do you seek my life, and thirst for my blood?" He replied, "Be quiet; let yourself be bound; you must go to the court with me;" and that he was obliged by his oath to do it. He then read to Jaques the cruel tyrannical mandate, and inquired very strictly for four other persons. Jaques replied that he would not betray or deceive any one; but if he had anything against him, or had heard any one complain in any respect of him, he might make it known. The traitor answered that he had heard nothing of the kind, and that Jaques was not apprehended on account of any crime, but solely because he had favoured heresy, and asked him if he was not an Anabaptist? Jaques denied having any attachment to heresy, or that he was an Anabaptist. He said that he had received but one baptism, according to God's word, and on profession of his faith. Being asked his opinion of the Romish church, Jaques replied that it was not from God. The traitor was then observed to sigh deeply, and with a sorrowful countenance said, "Oh, Jaques, must you fall into my hands?" Jaques answered, "Sir, I placed confidence in you, as an old acquaintance, and on account of our long intimacy; but I readily forgive you with all my heart; and it is my fervent prayer, that the Lord will have mercy on you." He thanked Jaques for his kindness, thinking he had done right in the sight of God, because he had acted according to his oath. Jaques said, "Do you think such conduct to be right before God and men? The time will come when you will find it quite otherwise." He then sent Jaques into the room, and said to him, "They will examine you at Leeuwarden, on your faith and doctrine." While Jaques was lying there a prisoner, his wife came to him. Seeing her overwhelmed with grief, this child of God became exceedingly dejected and afraid, for she was likewise pregnant. The sergeant with great

Matt. xxvi. 50.

1 Pet. iv. 15.

Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. Mark xvi. 16.

Luke xxiii. 34.

Wisd. v. 21.

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cruelty thrust her from him; but many of the spectators wept very feelingly with her, and entreated the sergeant, "Oh! let her be with him; it cannot last long." Jaques said to her, "My beloved one, go home and comfort yourself in the Lord. I am here a prisoner for the word of God; it will be no shame or dishonour to you; for I have injured no one." She said, "The Lord, in his wisdom, strengthen you; for, after this conflict, the everlasting crown is prepared for you. Oh! that I might die with you, and with you inherit a blessed life! my heart would then rejoice." Jaques said, "O my sister in the Lord, be not sorrowful at this; though I must go *first* a little space, it is the Lord's will." The sergeant could not bear this discourse, but said, "Make haste away." Jaques entreated him, saying, "Oh! let us have a short time together with God." Thus were these two dear sheep separated from each other; yet hoping to be again united at the resurrection of the just, where there shall be no more lamentation or separation for ever.

Rev. vi. 9.
2 Tim. iv. 8.
Matt. vi. 10.
Luke xi. 2.
Phil. iii. 11.
Rev. vii. 17.
Rev. xxi. 4.
Isa. xxv. 8.
Rev. ii. 13.

After enduring, by the grace of God, and suffering manifold assaults, with many examinations and threatenings from the bloodthirsty, he died with great steadfastness for the testimony of Jesus. He was murdered, not at the place of execution, but privately and by night. Credible persons were a short time since still living, who, early in the morning following the forepart of the night in which he was murdered, saw him in his leathern clothes, lying smothered and murdered in his blood. He is now resting under the altar of Jesus, awaiting, with the chosen of God, a blessed resurrection and everlasting life.

Rev. vi. 9.
Phil. iii. 11.

This deliberate traitor, Heer de Wael, was, not long after, very severely visited by God, as a punishment for his dark treachery. His departure out of this world was a very dreadful one, deserving the very serious consideration of all who are disposed to imitate his example. He

was suddenly driven from Leeuwarden, amid the scoffs and reproaches of the common people; so that the boatman who had to take him, stood with him in peril of life, and in great distress besought their pity. The traitor was unmercifully pelted with stones by the populace and children, and tauntingly upbraided for his treachery. They called him a Judas, a villain, a scoundrel, and an arch-heretic, and sang before him scornfully the following lines, which Jaques had composed:[q]—

"I have found thee," the traitor said,
"Now from my oath I'm free;
Cheerful in easy bonds be led,
Go to the court with me."

And again—

Is truth, or right, or justice done,
In sight of God and men?
Will not the day most surely come
To judge this deed again?

God the Lord further afflicted him severely with leprosy. With this he was also very bitterly upbraided. When they had sung one verse of the above hymn, they again contemptuously called out, "Thou leprous Judas, thou treacherous villain, art thou now sensible?" And the stones flew thicker and thicker, so that the boatman, who had to conduct him, cried out, in danger of his life, that he was charged by the magistrates to sail with him. Thus, in great shame and disgrace, he was driven from Leeuwarden, and wandered about, from one place to another, an object of scorn and contempt, till at last he was consumed by the leprosy, and like Antiochus and Herod, died a horrid and untimely death. The reports among

2 Kings v. 27.

2 Macc. ix. 9. Acts xii. 23.

q [This composition is found in Een Liedtboecken, fol. 49, 50. The account given by Van Braght of the treachery of Heer van Wael appears to be a prose version of this song.]

the common people are still more dreadful than the relation here given.[r]

[The year 1558 witnessed the martyrdoms of a large number of baptists in various parts of the Netherlands. Not less than forty are recorded, of whom six were women. In Antwerp alone twenty laid down their lives for the truth's sake. One was sacrificed at Brussels, one at Werwijk, one at Honschoten, one at Dort, and one at Leeuwarden. Four were put to death at Courtray, two at Bruges, six at Tournay, and three at the Hague. In some places much sympathy was shown for the sufferers, while in others the magistracy connived at and even suggested their escape. At Enkhuizen, the burgomaster sent his servant to urge a meeting of baptists to break up without delay, or they would all be apprehended; and in cases of arrest for religion, the magistrates of this town inflicted the mildest possible punishment.][s]

THE CONFESSION OF A WOMAN NAMED CLAESKEN,[t]

WHO LAID DOWN HER LIFE FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, 1559.

The commissary first asked me my name, whence I I came, how old I was, and other such questions. He next asked me, "Have you been baptized?"

Claesken. "Yes."

Commis. "Who baptized you?"

[r] [This long and interesting narrative is found in Het Offer des Heeren, fol. 123—153.]

[s] [Brandt, i. 121, 122. Under this year Van Braght gives brief narratives of thirty-four martyrs, besides those in the text.]

[t] [Ten Cate conjectures, in which he is supported by Schotanus, that Claesken was the sister of Jaques D'Auchy. Ges. der Doops. en Fries. p. 79.]

Claesken. "Jelis van Aken."

Commis. "That deceiver; he has himself renounced his faith. What did he when he baptized you?"

Claesken. "He baptized me in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. xxviii. 19.

Commis. "Where were you baptized?"

Claesken. "At Worcum, in the fields."

Commis. "Were there more persons present?"

Claesken. "Yes."

Commis. "Who were they?"

Claesken. "I have forgotten."

Commis. "What was the cause of your going there?"

Claesken. "I have forgotten; I can say that with truth."

Commis. "Have not your children been baptized?"

Claesken. "My two little children have not."

Commis. "Why did you not have your children baptized?" [257]

Claesken. "Because I was satisfied with their being as the Lord had given them me."

Commis. "Why were you so well satisfied with Abraham and Sicke, and not with Doume? You had Doume baptized?"

Claesken. "I did not then know."

Commis. "What did you not then know?"

Claeskin. "What I now know."

Commis. "What do you now know?"

Claesken. "What the Lord has given me to know." Matt. xi. 25.

Commis. "What has the Lord given you to know?"

Claesken. "That I cannot understand from the scripture that it is proper."

Commis. "How long is it since you were last at church?"

Claesken. "Nine or ten years."

These are the questions he asked me; but he made many more inquiries. When I did not readily answer, he

said, I had a dumb devil in me; that the devil transformed himself in us into an angel of light, and so with all of us heretics. He then read to me the articles that I had confessed, and told me that my confession would come before the magistrates; if I wished it, he would write differently. I said, "You need not write anything else."

Questions and Answers between the Inquisitor and Claesken.

Inquisitor. "Why were you baptized?"

Matt. iii. 2. Matt. iv. 17. Acts ii. 38.

Claesken. "The scriptures speak of a new life. John calls first for repentance; also Christ himself, and after him the apostles. They taught the people to repent and be converted, and then to be baptized. Thus did I repent, was converted, and then baptized." To this he said but little.

Inq. "Why have you not had your children baptized?"

Claesken. "I cannot understand from the scripture that they ought to be."

Psa. li. 5.

Inq. "David however says, *I was born in sin; in sin did my mother conceive me.* Therefore, children being born in original sin should be baptized, in order to be saved."

Claesken. "Can a person be saved by an outward sign? then has Christ died in vain."

Inq. "It is said, John iii. 5, men *must be born again of water and the Spirit;* therefore the children must be baptized."

Claesken. "Christ did not say that to children, but to those of understanding; I therefore sought the new birth. We know that children are in the Lord's hands. The

Matt. xix. 14.

Lord said, *Suffer little children to come unto me; of such is the kingdom of heaven.*"

Mark x. 14. 1 Cor. i. 16.

Inq. "The household of Stephanus was baptized; in which perchance there may have been children."

Claesken. "We do not rest on probabilities; we have a positive certainty." To this, also, he did not say much.

Inq. "What do you hold concerning the holy church?"

Claesken. "I esteem it highly." Eph. v. 29.

Inq. "Why then do you not go to church?"

Claesken. "I do not approve of your church service?"

Inq. "Do you believe that God is almighty?"

Claesken. "Yes, that I believe firmly."

Inq. "Do you not then also believe that Christ sanctified and is in the bread? Paul says, *The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? and the cup, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?* 1 Cor x 16.

Claesken. "I know well what Paul says, and I truly believe the same."

Inq. "Christ said, *Take, eat; this is my body;* and Paul in like manner." Matt. xxvi. 26.

Inq. "I know well what Paul and Christ say; and so I believe." 1 Cor. xi. 23.

Inq. "Do you believe that Christ consecrates it, and comes into the bread?"

Claesken. "Christ is seated at his Father's right hand; he does not come between men's teeth." Mark xvi. 19. Acts ii. 34. Eph. i. 20.

Inq. "If you remain in that faith, you will go into the depths of hell; all heretics say the same; and Jelis van Aken has deceived you. He has himself renounced his belief, having confessed that he had erred."

Claesken. "I do not rest on Jelis, nor on any man; but alone on Christ. He is our foundation; on this we are built, as Christ teaches us in his gospel; *Whosoever heareth my words, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock.* Though the rains descend and beat upon that house, yet it does not fall. These are the storms that beat upon our house, but Christ is our stronghold; he will safely keep us." Jer. xvii. 5. Matt. xvi. 18. Matt. vii. 24.

Inq. "You do not understand it; there are other scriptures, with which you are not acquainted."

Claesken. "We need no other scriptures than the holy gospel, which Christ has spoken to us with his blessed mouth, and sealed with his blood. If we can keep that, we shall indeed be blessed."

Inq. "You should permit yourself to be instructed; the holy fathers instituted the church service more than fifteen hundred years ago."

Claesken. "The holy fathers had no such sanctity;
Matt. xv. 6. these are the commandments and traditions of men. The apostles did not use them, and I have read nothing of them."

Inq. "Will you be wiser than the holy church?"

Eph. v. 25. *Claesken.* "I wish to do nothing contrary to the holy church. I have placed myself in subjection to the holy church."

Inq. "You should think; 'Shall I know better than the holy fathers for more than fifteen hundred years?' you ought to think that you are unlearned."

[238] *Claesken.* "Although I am a simple person before men,
Matt. xi. 25. I am not unwise in the knowledge of the Lord; do you not know that the Lord thanked his Father, that he had
Luke x. 21. hid these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes?"

On one occasion, there were two monks with the inquisitor, who also wished to instruct me. But they were not able to say much; only that we were people of
1 Tim. vi. 5. shattered brains, incapable of faith; we were *ever learning,*
2 Tim. iii. 7. *and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* I said, "When the day of the Lord comes, you will find
Wisd. v. 3. it otherwise. Take heed lest you then shall say, 'These are they whom we had sometimes in derision: behold, how are they now numbered among the children of God, and their lot among the saints!" They replied, "See!

she condemns us." I said, "I do not condemn you; but I say, Take heed. Our life is now accounted madness; and our end without honour; but when the day of the Lord arrives, you will indeed find it otherwise." The beginning and the end of it was, that the devil was in me, and that I was deceived. I said, "Is Christ a deceiver, then?" He replied, "No; Christ is no deceiver." I said, "Neither am I deceived. I seek and desire nothing but to fear the Lord with my whole heart, and not (knowingly) to transgress one tittle of his commandments." After speaking to me at great length, he said, "I can say nothing more to you; you must reflect." I replied, "I cannot think otherwise; I know that the truth is on my side."

Wisd. v. 4.

John vii. 20.

Deut. vi. 17.

When I again came before him, he said, "Well, Claesken, what have you resolved?"

Claesken. "I have resolved to remain steadfast in that to which the Lord hath called me."

Matt. xx. 1.

Inq. "The devil has called you; he transforms himself into an angel of light in your people."

The sixth time that he examined me, he inquired, "When Christ supped with his disciples, did he not then give them his flesh to eat and his blood to drink?"

Matt. xxvi. 26.

Claesken. "He gave them bread and wine; but his body he gave for their redemption."

Inq. "Christ says plainly, 'Take, eat; this is my flesh;' you can certainly say nothing against that."

Claesken. "Paul says, *I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it and gave it to his apostles, and said, Take eat; this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me.* And after supper, he in like manner took the cup saying, *This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remem-*

1 Cor. xi. 23.

brance of me; for as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come. Christ has therefore left us his supper, that we should be put in remembrance of his death; that he gave his body and shed his blood for us. This supper I desire to observe with God's people and no other." He kept to his old text, "We must eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood; for this is the plain meaning of the words of Christ and Paul."

Luke xxii. 19.

Claesken. "Because these words are so plain, I can easily understand them; but it is as Paul says, 'That they who turn not to the Lord, have a veil upon their hearts; but from their hearts who turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. We have turned to the Lord, to us is nothing veiled."

Inq. "In John vi. Christ saith plainly that men must eat his flesh and drink his blood."

John vi. 53.

Claesken. "It is also written that when the Jews murmured, and said, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* Christ replied, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, ye have no life in you:* again he said, *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life;* and added, *Flesh and blood profit nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life.* They that believe in God, and walk in all righteousness, they are the temple of God; in them God will walk and dwell, as Paul testifies.

1 Cor. iii. 16.

The seventh time that he examined me, he said, "Do you not believe that the apostles ate the flesh of Christ?"

Matt. xxvi. 26.

Claesken. "Christ took the bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and he gave them his body for their redemption."

Inq. "Is that what you believe?"

Claesken. "I believe only what Christ has spoken."

Inq. "I testify to you then that I am pure from your blood. Your blood be upon your own head."

Claesken. "With that I am content."

Inq. "Herewith I give you over to the Lord."

He examined me once more, and asked me, "Do you not yet believe that the apostles did eat Christ's flesh?"

Claesken. "I have already told you."

Inq. "Tell me now."

Claesken. "I will tell you no more."

Inq. "Are you of the same opinion respecting baptism?"

Claesken. "You are well aware that the penitent alone should be baptized." Matt. xxviii. 19.

Inq. "That is quite true when a Jew comes who has not yet been baptized. Do you remain of the same mind as to infant baptism?"

Claesken. "Yes, I do."

Inq. "Do you not believe anything else?"

Claesken. "I believe nothing but what Christ has commanded."

Inq. "Then I testify to you that you will be tormented for ever in the gulf of hell."

Claesken. "How dare you condemn me so fearfully, since judgment belongs to God alone? I am not terrified by it; I know indeed better; when the day of the Lord comes it will be quite different." Acts xvii. 31. [239]

I then inquired, "What does my husband say?"

Inq. "Your husband remains of the same mind, the Lord must enlighten you."

Claesken. "We are already enlightened, the Lord be praised."

Respecting my baptism he did not say much; nor concerning infant baptism; but he was continually repeating that men must eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; urging that it had been instituted for more than fifteen hundred years, and that I was a plain person, and had scarcely read the Testament once through. I said, "Do

Matt. xix. 29. you think that we go upon uncertainties? The contents of the New Testament are not hidden from us. We forsake our dear children, which I would not leave for the whole world, and we renounce all we have; should *we* go upon uncertainties? We seek nought else than our salvation. You cannot prove by the scriptures that we believe or do the least thing in opposition to the word of God." He would have it that we had it all from the devil, and that a Luke i. 48. proud devil was in us. I said, "We know that the proud are driven from the judgment-seat." His remarks were so lengthened, that he sometimes questioned whether I heard him. I was therefore obliged sometimes to speak, as I wished him not to think I did not. But I could not bear to hear how shamefully he spoke against the truth.

[While in prison Claesken addressed a letter to her relatives, and also to her friends in the faith; some portions are deeply interesting as illustrative of the state of mind in which she met the bitter death awaiting her. It is dated March 14, 1559.]

My dearly beloved friends, take it to heart, how great Mal. iii. 18. is the difference between them that fear God and them that fear him not. Dig deep into the scriptures, that you John v. 39. Matt. xi. 20. be not like the cities of which Christ speaks in the [240] gospel. Because they took not to heart the mighty works that were done in them, therefore Christ declared that it should be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for those cities. Dear friends, the Lord displays to you now such mighty works by us, before your eyes. Let it strengthen you, as Paul says, Phil. i. 14. *Many of the brethren, waxing confident in the Lord by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.* My dear friends, observe that when the Lord did his mighty deeds, he did them not for the sake of one alone, as we read John xi. 37, 42. in John, when he raised Lazarus from the dead; but that the people might see his wonderful works and believe in

him. But some only believed on him, others grew worse, saying, *Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?* Thus it is at this day with those that believe not; for notwithstanding they plainly see the strength and power we have in the Lord, yet is it to them an offence, and they say we do it from stubbornness. And when we say that the righteous must suffer persecution, they say that we are persecuted because of anabaptism. Thus is it an offence to them; but to them that believe in God it is well known that we suffer for righteousness' sake; to those it will be (I trust) a support, while to us a trial, and for eternal blessedness by the grace of God.

2 Tim. iii. 12.
1 Pet. ii. 6, 8.
Matt. v. 10.

My dearly beloved friends, take it truly to heart, for what I do is from the most sincere and ardent love that I have for your souls, because I am so sure and certain that there is no other way by which men can be saved; I therefore warn you from a pure heart it will be found no otherwise in eternity. Therefore, though some say and talk much, they will not take upon themselves the cross of Christ, and on that account suffer persecution, as Paul speaks. Take it as your rule that you must follow Christ's footsteps; the whole scripture urges us to meet and prepare ourselves for suffering. This Paul also says: *If so be we suffer with him, we shall also rejoice together; for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* We read that all the holy men of God were tried with much affliction and suffering, and how cheerfully they endured that suffering; yea, they rejoiced greatly that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of God. But they who have not the true love of God desire to escape that suffering. They prefer this transient life to the Lord their God, although Christ says, *Whosoever will save his life shall lose it*; and *whosoever will lose his life for my sake* and the gospel's, shall save it to

Gal vi. 12.
1 Pet. ii. 21.
Acts xiv. 22.
Rom. viii. 17.
2 Cor. i. 5.
Judith viii. 21.
Acts v. 41.
Matt. xvi. 25.

life everlasting. Not that all men must die for the word of the Lord, but we must be so minded, that we would rather die than once knowingly and willingly transgress one of the Lord's commandments. Therefore, Christ saith,

Matt. x. 37. "He that loveth aught more than me, is not worthy of me."

Therefore, my heartily esteemed friends, whom I love

Heb. xii. 2. with my whole heart, pay no regard to what men say,

[241] but look alone to Christ Jesus, how he has gone before us in affliction and suffering. Love the *Lord your God*

Matt. xxii. 37. *with all your heart, and with all your mind* and strength; yea, though the whole world stood against and stormed upon you, you need not be afraid if you have God for your

1 Cor. xiii. 7. Father, and sincerely love God and his saints. For love endureth all things; but where true love is not found, there

Matt. xiii. 21. all will soon be broken in pieces when persecution and

Rom. v. 5. distress come. But to him that commends himself to the Lord, and who possesses love, is nothing hard. Had I not experienced this myself, it would have been impossible for me to have found it so easy to be borne. Therefore,

Matt. xi. 30. saith Christ, *My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* Yes, my dear friends, such is the state of my mind, and such love have I to my Lord and my God, that could I save my life by a thought, but knew it was not pleasing to the Lord, I would rather die than think such a thought.

2 Cor. xii. 1. Not that I boast myself; the Lord knows how vile I am before him; but it is through the great mercy, and kind-

Eph. ii. 7. ness, and love that he hath showed to us, that we are chosen to his heavenly kingdom. For the first time I

Isa. xlix. 15. have experienced the unspeakable grace, and compassion,

1 John iv. 19. and love of God; and how we ought, therefore, to love him in return. Yea, so high and vast are his love and grace in me, that my sorrow is turned into joy.

I must now relate to you the distress I experienced before I was apprehended. I allude to the apostle's

2 Cor. vii. 10. words, that I have had godly affliction; and that godly

sorrow worketh salvation. I sometimes experienced such dejection, that I knew not where to go. Sometimes I cried aloud to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, break in pieces this old heart, and give me a new heart and mind, that I may be found upright before thee." I said to my dear husband, "When I measure my life by the scripture, it seems to me that I must perish. I may well say with David, *My sins are gone over my head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.*" I said, "My dear husband, do pray to the Lord for me, for I am tempted; the more I turn my thoughts to the Lord, the more does the tempter bring to me other thoughts." I cried thus to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, thou knowest that I desire only to fear thee." My husband sometimes comforted me. To him it seemed that I did nothing but what was acceptable to the Lord. I said, "I have lost my first love, therefore, I am so distressed that I cannot sleep: there is no hope of the destruction of sin; I fear I shall not live long; whatever endeavours I use to become better, I continue equally vile. O, wretched creature; whither shall I go!"

Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

Psa. xxxviii. 4.

1 Pet. v. 9.

Rev. ii. 4.

Rom. vii. 24.

I should have written you more, but the messenger came to me that we must go. My dearly beloved friends, my husband and I, and our brother, heard the sentence with great joy; we showed each other much affection! and had such cheerful minds! I thanked the Lord so heartily, that all the gentlemen heard it. They told me to be quiet; but I spake with equal boldness. When we had heard our sentence, we all three said that they had condemned innocent blood, with other expressions. My dear husband spoke much and very affectionately. We thanked the Lord with a countenance so cheerful, that all the people observed it.

Prov. vi. 17.

Jer. vii. 6, and xxii. 3.

I commend you to the Lord. Hasten to come with us; that we may dwell together in eternity.

Acts xx. 32.

The following is another Letter or Confession of the same Claesken.

When we were before the whole council, we were addressed by the procureur-general, who stated to the magistrates, generally, what we had confessed before the commissary. He made a lengthened statement, showing how long it was since we had been to church; that we had not had our children baptized; that we were Anabaptists. He also said, that according to the proclamation, we had forfeited our lives, and that our effects had fallen to the king. He then charged us before the bench, and demanded our life and goods. Having told how and where we had received baptism, he asked us if we would abide
Eph. iv. 5. by our baptism? We spoke without fear, and said cheer-
Matt. xxviii. 19. fully, that we had received one baptism according to the Lord's command. Our brother Jaques said, that if they could convince him by the word of the Lord, he would not act contrary to God's word.

My husband said, that he desired to abide by his baptism. I said the same as our brother had said, that we had received our baptism according to the word of God. He said, each time, "As you think." He then asked us if we did not desire an advocate? Our brother said,
1 John ii. 1. "Christ is our advocate." We then went away. We
Acts v. 41. departed from the council cheerful and joyful, although it would cost us our lives.

Since then, my husband and our brother have been once before the pastor of the old court, and on Sunday in Lent we were all three before the treasurer. Our brother had first a long discourse with him, and brought such proofs from the scriptures, that he knew not what to
[242] say against it, further than that it was from the devil; for there were many devils in hell, and ours was the

worst. My husband was then taken before him, and I was afterwards summoned. When I came, he commenced with infant baptism, and my baptism; and said that we must eat Christ's flesh, and many other things. I replied, "You need not bring all these subjects forward; it is not for me to dispute with you. I tell you plainly, I desire to hold fast that to which the Lord has called me." He said, "The devil had called me." I said, "Is it now the nature of the devil to renounce evil and do good? It fares with us as the prophet says, *He that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey.* Thus it has been with us from the first day that we renounced our vain wicked life; we have been hated of all men, as Christ saith, *Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake;* he also saith, *Fear not them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but fear him that can cast both soul and body into hell.* Yes, him we fear alone." He would have had me speak of infant baptism, and of eating Christ's flesh. I said, "Your questions are not worthy to be answered; they are unprofitable. I have told you enough. I will say no more. We have had enough of it." I said, "Open your eyes, and see that what the Lord gives us to do it is not in man to do; to be willing to leave our dear children, and joyfully to lay down our lives for the honour of God." I said also, "Take heed what you do; we are God's holy people; God's chosen. Though all your learned men throughout the world should agree, they could not prove to us by the word of the Lord, that we believe or practise anything contrary to God's word." He said, "That we did not believe that the apostles ate the flesh of Christ, and drank his blood, although Christ said, *Take, eat; this is my body.*" I said, "Christ took the bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to his apostles. When he took that bread, and brake it, and gave it them, the bread

Isa. lix. 15.

Matt. x. 22, 28. Luke xii. 4.

Isa. li. 7.

Matt. xix. 29.

Matt. xxvi. 26.

was surely no flesh. He did not give them his living body to eat, in which he stood alive amongst them; but he gave his body for their redemption; not of them alone, but for the redemption of all that believed in him." But whatever might be said to him he kept to his old theme. Our brother proved every thing so clearly from the scriptures, that he had not a tittle to say in opposition. Our brother spake loud, in order that they who stood without in the chancel, might hear how plainly he showed him all things. I spake, also, as loud as I could, and cheerfully. What the Lord brought to my mind, that I spoke without hesitation; all which it would be too long to relate. His expression constantly was, that we had the devil in us; that Satan appeared as an angel of light to us; that we had the devil of pride in us; and that we must go for ever into the depths of hell. This he said so often, every time we were before him, that I said, "Lightly as you thrust us down into hell, as high are we raised by the Lord."

Of infant baptism he knew nothing else to say than what Christ saith, Ye must be born again of water and the Spirit. I said, "Children cannot understand the new birth; Christ spake that to those of understanding; therefore have we put off our past life, and have put on a new life. We are assured that our children are blessed in the sight of the Lord." He then brought David forward, that he was born in sin. Our brother explained it clearly to him; but he remained unable to comprehend as ever. When we had ended our discourse, I asked him what my husband said? He replied, "Your husband remains just the same." I said, "What will you do with my poor husband, who cannot read a letter?" He then said, "Your condemnation will be greater than your husband's, because you can read and have misled him." Upon this I parted from him. After this, the aforesaid Claesken,

John iii. 5.

Col. iii. 8. Matt xix. 14.

Psa. li. 5.

with her husband, and brother Jaques, was drowned for the testimony she bore to the truth, at Leeuwarden, in Friesland, in March, 1559.[u]

WOLFGANG MAIR, AND WOLFGANG HUBER.—1559. [243]

In this year, 1559, there were two brethren whose names were Wolfgang Mair and Wolfgang Huber, arrested in the country of Saltzburg for the sake of the faith, and taken to Titmain, from thence they were consigned to Saltzburg, in which place they both had to taste and suffer great pain, misery, and tyranny. Wolfgang Mair was twice brought to the rack, and each time undressed and most severely tortured; but he could not be prevailed upon to say anything contrary to his belief. The secretary said: "You must either say who took you into their houses and harboured you, or you must die on the rack." He said: "If I die I die, but I will say nothing against my conscience, nor will I betray those who have shown me kindness." After this they ceased to torture him.

Matt. xii. 10. Acts xii. 3. Matt. ii. 14. Matt. vii. 12.

Priests came to them with enticing words, employing every means and many threatenings and entreaties to change their minds, depriving them of all hope by their many bitter words. They defended the truth with great zeal, for the Lord strengthened them so much that they had already given up their lives for the truth.

Psa. xxxvii. 12. Matt. viii. 34. 2 Pet. ii. 12.

Many consultations were held about them, particularly among the priests; it was once resolved that they should continue in confinement for life, but God brought that counsel to nought. They were then, with much urgency, solicited by one and another to give up their faith, but it was to no purpose; they put them all to shame with the

John xi. 47. 1 Cor. x. 28. Gal. v. 6.

[u] [Het Offer des Heeren, fol. 153—162. Ten Cate. Gesch. der Doops. en Fries., p. 79.]

word of God, and testified fearlessly that their faith was the way of divine truth in Christ Jesus, in which, by the help
Matt. x. 22. of God, they would steadfastly abide, whatever might, by any one, be said or undertaken against it. After this they were again taken from Saltzburg to Titmain to be sentenced to death. When their sentence was read they firmly opposed it, saying that it was not true, and that their faith was every way profitable, and was neither enthusiasm nor heresy.

When they were carried outside the town some women
Luke xxiii. 27. wept from compassion that they should thus, for the sake of their faith, be put to death; but they said, "Weep not
James v. 13. on our account; weep for yourselves and your sins;" they
Luke xxi. 28. likewise sang for joy that their end and their redemption were nigh.

When they were at the place of execution, the brother, Wolfgang Mair, called out to the people: "This day I will
Rom. xii. 1. present to my God a true burnt-offering, pay my vows,
Acts xii. 2. and attest divine truth by my blood." They were then executed with the sword, and afterwards burned with fire. They resigned their lives with comfort, courage, and confidence, to inherit eternal life.

Some who had made themselves the most guilty in their apprehension and death, were remarkably overtaken by the judgment of God; some lived but a short time afterwards; others did not die a natural death, but were so visited by God that it could be plainly seen that the wrath of God fell upon them.[x]

[x] [Mair and Huber appear to have been arrested in consequence of an order of the duke Albert, whose fears for his government had been excited by the report that some leaders of the baptists had arrived in the district of Salzburg. Great zeal was shown for their discovery, and not, as it appears, without success. MS. Cronickel, fol. 87. Winter, Ges. der baier, Weidert, p. 116.]

TRIJNKEN KEUTS.—1559. [244]

Trijnken Keuts was a widow, residing in the town of Maestricht. When she had come to the knowledge of divine truth, through the holy gospel, she, with all simplicity cordially embraced it, and continued day and night in diligent supplications, until the Lord, by the bright shining of his grace, further enlightened her, and endued her with the power of faith. Being thus believing and penitent, she was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, on a true profession of her faith, as a member of the body and church of Jesus Christ. Living thus, according to her faith, no longer frequenting popish idolatry, but abstaining from every abomination, and devoting herself to a new life, the venomous beast could not endure it. She was informed against, to the magistrates of the place, as a heretic. She was therefore summoned to appear at the Lantskroon, which is the house where the burgomasters and the council hold their sittings. When she had received the summons by a burgomaster's officer, she went to the house. When there the burgomasters informed her of the information they had received, and inquired if it was correct. Having given them a proper answer and confessed the truth, they detained her as a prisoner. When she had now been in confinement for some time, having had in the meanwhile many discussions and conflicts, she was at last very rigidly examined by the priests, one of whom was a black-friar. Fearlessly she confessed her faith, and when asked if she had been re-baptized, she said, "I have been baptized as a believer, and agreeably to the teaching of Christ." On this point they had many discussions, but she held fast the truth. The priests also questioned her respecting the sacrament, whether she did not believe that after the priest had pronounced over it five words, Christ was

Luke xviii. 7.
Mark xvi 16.
Eph. i. 22.
1 Cor. x. 14.
2 Cor. vi. 17.
Rev. xvii. 3.
Acts xii. 3.
Matt. x. 32.
Mark xvi. 16.

actually in the bread, his flesh and blood, the same as when he hung on the cross." Trijne replied that she
Mark xvi. 19. believed that Christ was ascended into heaven and was sitting at the right hand of God his heavenly Father. She asked, "How could he come into the bread?"

As she remained steadfast to the truth the priests condemned her to be burned here to powder, and then eternally in hell. Trijne said: "When, a short time hence,
Matt. xxv. 34. you follow me to the judgment-seat of God, you will find it otherwise." On this judgment Trijne was delivered
John xvi. 2. over to the sheriff and justices, who sentenced her, in conformity with the emperor's proclamation, to be burned to ashes. This Trijne thankfully accepted, and cheerfully resigned herself to it; she was then gagged and led to
2 Pet. i. 14. the Vrythof, where she put off her tabernacle and was
Luke xxiii. 46. burned to ashes, having commended her soul into the hands of God.

This took place in 1559, on the eve of Palm Sunday in Lent.

It was currently reported as true, that one of the aforesaid priests, the black-friar, was found dead in his cell on the third day after Trijne was sacrificed and burned, without its being known that he had been sick, and that he had been eaten up of lice; but what God may have
Rom. xiv. 12. done in this matter we leave to his righteous judgment, who will render to every one his deserved reward.

ADRIAN PAN AND HIS WIFE.—1559.

[245] In the year 1559 the faithful friend of Christ, Adrian Pan, with his wife, fell into the clutches of wolves at Antwerp, in Brabant. By the grace of God they endured severe imprisonment and cruel trials, but were so firmly united, by genuine faith and lively hope, to their Captain,

Christ Jesus, that by no means whatever could they be brought to apostatize; they were therefore sentenced to death by the rulers of darkness, who knew not the light of truth. Adrian Pan was put to a miserable death by the sword; his wife, who was pregnant, bore all this for the sake of Christ, although it distressed her greatly. After her confinement she was drowned, displaying great steadfastness of mind; thus they obtained everlasting rest with the Lord.

Eph. vi. 12. 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Heb iv. 1.

A Letter of Adrian Pan, written from Prison. 1559.

Grace and peace from God our heavenly Father, through the merits of Jesus Christ, his beloved Son, with the true illumination of the Holy Ghost, be unto all lovers of eternal truth. Amen.

Rom. i. 7.

My brethren, heartily beloved and longed for, whom we love from our inmost souls, and bear on our hearts as those with whom we are one in mind and body, although we are now separated from you in presence, ye are so much the more in our hearts. We pray that no one will faint on account of our distress; for we hope it will give you joy to hear, what we certainly know, that it is for the truth. Let none of you suffer as an evil doer, says Peter, or as one coveting another's goods; but if you suffer as Christians, *happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you, but on their part he is evil spoken of.* Paul says, that *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;* yea, that never hath eye seen, nor hath it ever entered into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love him; that *as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* My dear brethren, how should we be otherwise than of good courage, finding such comfort? My dear friends, the more we are exercised

2 John i. 2. Acts iv. 32.

Eph. iii. 13. 1 Thess. iii. 3.

1 Pet. iv. 15.

1 Pet. iv. 14.

Rom. viii. 18.

1 Cor. ii. 9.

2 Cor. i. 5.

Psa. xciv. 19.

with tribulation, the more are we comforted. This we truly experienced when we first fell into their hands, and they beset the house as if they would have destroyed it, with all that it contained, then my heart was strengthened as if I had been another man. My wife was indeed a little fearful before they laid their hands upon us; but when she saw that it must be even so, fear departed from her, as if she had put off a garment, and she began to sing. We
1 Thess v. 2. did not expect them, and we had packed up our goods and thought soon to depart; but the Lord had otherwise appointed, praised be his name for ever. When they began to plunder I could well have sung. Never did I experience greater joy, but I restrained myself and did not sing. I thought, many trials yet await me; but
Psa. xxv. 2. praised be the Lord, who suffers us not to be put to shame. They began to taunt us much with Munster and Amsterdam, but I said I had nothing to do with them, and that it was for the truth that we suffered. Besides, I am not thirty-three years old, and how could I have been present there? Some blasphemed, some pitied us, but I
Luke xxiii. 27. said, "Weep not for us, but weep for yourselves and your children." Methinks we might well have said with David,
Psa. xci. 7. "Though a hundred thousand should surround me, and
Psa. cxviii. 11. come upon me, I would not fear them; *yea, they compassed me about; they compassed me about like bees; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.*"

My dear brethren, we say not this from any boasting,
Eph. iii. 16. but from joy. We thank our God for his great might and
1 Thess. v. 25. strength that he grants us, to the rejoicing of all who love the truth, and may come to hear it. Pray for us, that we
Matt. xxiv. 13. may remain steadfast unto the end; and we request you to accept this kindly, though we have written little. The fifteenth day of our imprisonment, and the 9th of May. My wife and myself greet you heartily, all of you that we know, or that may inquire for us.

Another Letter of Adrian Pan, which he wrote after he was sentenced.

Grace and peace from God our heavenly Father, through the merits of Jesus Christ, with the true illumination of the Holy Ghost, unto all who love the eternal truth. Amen. Rom. i. 7.

My dear N., I am mindful of you still, even at the end of my life, and pray Almighty God, that he will comfort you with his Spirit, and guide you into all spiritual wisdom and understanding that may be profitable to your salvation. Col i. 9. [246] I proceed to inform you that on the 2nd of June I was put to the torture, and on the sixteenth I was led to the tribunal, where they asked me if I had been baptized, or re-baptized. I asked if I might speak; they gave me permission. I said that I believed all that was written in the law and the prophets; that by what Jesus Christ and his apostles had taught and commanded I desired to live and die; and that, on the confession of my sins that I was sorry for them, and on the avowal of my faith, I had been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. xxviii. 19. I was then condemned, so that I expect nothing else than the infliction on my body of the punishment assigned me; the Lord will receive my spirit; I am ready to live or die for the name of the Lord. Acts vii. 59. I cannot sufficiently praise and thank my God that he has called and permitted me to suffer for his name. Acts xxi. 13. Acts v. 41. O, my dear N., I am in good spirits, the Lord will (I hope) strengthen me to the end. I cannot say that I ever had a more happy day in prison than when I fell into their hands, and when I was condemned. My dear N., be of good courage; the end is nearly come; let us not fear them that kill the body, for Christ teaches us whom we must fear. Matt. x. 28. Myself and wife greet you very heartily with the peace of God; take in good part the little I have written; I would willingly

have written you more fully but am not very well gifted for it. But I thank the Lord for all that he has bestowed upon me.

Greet very heartily the dear friends whom we know, or who inquire for us. Farewell.

Written by me, Adrian Pan.[y]

HANS DE VETTE,

WITH ELEVEN OTHERS, PUT TO DEATH FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, AT GHENT, IN FLANDERS.—ANNO 1559.

A Confession, written by Hans de Vette, at Ghent, where he, with eleven others, lay in bonds, in the year 1559, *referring to his examination.*

Acts xxii. 19. On the first Friday after Whitsuntide, the persons whose names here follow, were taken to prison at Ghent: Peter Coerten, of Menin; Karl Tankreet, of Nipkerke; with Proentken, his wife, from Belle; Jacob Spillebaut, Abraham Tankreet, and Mayken Floris of Nipkerke; Anthonis, of Cassel; Hans de Smit; Marcus, his brother; Hans de Vette, with Maritgen, his wife, from Waesten, and Tanneken, the wife of J. de S. These persons were treacherously betrayed into the hands of the procureur-general, who, with three constables, took them prisoners at their lodgings in the evening.

On the following day we were visited by the magistrates, who asked us, each one separately, our names, and from whence we were; which we told them. They then inquired whether we acknowledged any other baptism than infant baptism; and, likewise, if we had received any

Matt. xxviii 19. other? We all renounced their idolatrous infant baptism,

[y] [These letters of Adrian Pan are also found in Het Offer des Heeren, fol. 162].

and acknowledged that we had received Christian baptism, with the exception of Marcus de Smit, who confessed that he had not yet received it; but desired, had a suitable opportunity occurred, with his whole heart to receive the same. They afterwards said, if we wished to have any learned persons to instruct us, they would send them to us; and such as we liked, whether clergy or laymen. They said that they would not be precipitate with us; but, as they asked us nearly all the same things, one by one, I, who write this, said, that by the grace of God I desired no other instruction than that I had received, Gal. i. 8. should there come even an angel from heaven.

About a week afterwards they sent, notwithstanding, a certain brother, Peter de Backer, who, with another, his companion, had spied us out; two false prophets, who, as 2 Pet ii. 1. I think, are called Jacobins. Having been brought before them, after a few words, we came upon the subject of infant baptism, which he stated to be an ordinance instituted by God, saying, that circumcision was a figure thereof; also, that the apostles had baptized whole house- Acts x. 15. holds, and Christ had commanded it. John iii. But when I had showed him that he had not spoken aright, and that the apostles had baptized none without faith, as is Acts ii. 38. clearly found in the Acts of the Apostles, he sought to speak upon another article, saying, that we should not be able to agree concerning it. I said, that I wished to finish the former first. I entreated him to reform; for I showed him that their service was a foul, noisome piece of idolatry, contrary to all God's commandments, and of Matt. xv. 13. human planting; that the commandments of God were sufficient, needing no lying additions of men, and that it was unprofitable to observe what God had not commanded. He then said that I was deceived, and laid too much stress upon their faults; that there were, indeed, some abuses in their church, but the chief things they

held there were good. After much conversation we separated.

Some days after the Dean Ronse came, who is an in-
[247] quisitor in Flanders, and with him the same Peter de Backer, who had first been with us, with other false prophets besides. Upon coming before them the dean asked me my name; I said that I was called Hans de Vette. He then asked me if I was married; I said I was. He inquired, then, if my wife was from Waesten? I answered "Yes." He asked how long I had been married; I said, "Not very long." He asked me in what church and by what parish priest it was performed. I answered him, whether it was found in the scriptures that a parish priest was needful thereto. He then said that whores and rogues were married in that way without a parish priest; whereupon I said that I had acted agreeably to the directions of
1 Cor. vii. 2. the scriptures, being instructed by Paul, in order to avoid adultery, that it is better to marry than to burn; whores and rogues, on the contrary, had much rather burn than marry, as is so commonly seen and heard of so many thousands in this wicked world. He then said *that* were a small matter; that if I had done nothing worse it would be well for me; I should only say where it took place. I
Matt. xxvi. 63. said that I did not intend to tell him. He then adjured me, by the living God, that I should tell him; but I was silent.

He then asked me why I had not remained in the Romish church and in her service? to which I answered that I had
Rev. xviii. 4. separated from her that I might not be a partaker of her
2 Cor. xvi. 4. plagues, for darkness could have no communion with light, nor Christ with Belial; nor the righteous with the un-
2 Cor. vi. 17. righteous, &c.; hence we must depart from their midst. He then asked me what I held concerning the seven sacraments, which he partly named to me; but I answered that I could not approve of them on account of the abominable

idolatry which they maintained; but since it is commanded us by the Lord to confess his name before men, so I said I would readily confess my faith to him; he said that I should. I then began to make my confession: that I believed in one God, the maker of heaven and earth, the waters and the sea, and all that therein is, who made man in his own image; him alone must we serve, honour, worship, and love with all our soul, and all our might, and in all our thoughts, for he alone is good; forsaking all idols, whether they be of gold, silver, stone, metal, wood, bread, of whatever form or kind soever they may be, they being rejected and forbidden in the holy scriptures; *for we know that an idol is nothing in the world.*

Matt. x. 32.
Gen. i. 1.
Ecclus xvii. 9.
James iii. 9.
Matt. iv. 10.
Deut. vi. 1.
Matt. xix. 17.
Exod. xx.
1 Cor. viii. 4.

As I was still speaking, the dean Ronse told me that I made it too long to write it all down; "You would give us much to do," said he, "if in this manner you confess your faith from the beginning of the Bible! I, too, believe," he continued, "what you have just said; but what do you say of the sacrament of baptism, as practised in our church, and to which every one must come if they would be saved?" I then said that I did not approve of infant baptism, because it is not commanded by God. He said that circumcision was a figure of it, and that all the children that were not circumcised under the Old Testament, or not baptized under the New Testament, must perish; whereupon, following up his words, I said: "Females, then, under the Old Testament must have been lost." He became angry, and said *that* was only a piece of philosophy I had then brought forward. I replied that he ought to be ashamed to say that the children were condemned, to whom the Lord says the kingdom of heaven belonged. He said that I lied. Another priest told me, that one of Paul's disciples writes that he had learned the baptism of infants from Paul, his master. I replied that Paul writes that we should not soon be shaken in mind, either by spirit, or angel, or

Matt. xix. 14.
2 Thess. ii. 2.

Gal. i. 8. by letter, as from them; were it even that an angel came from heaven who should teach us otherwise than is written in the holy gospel, he is accursed. Further, I told him that he should show me where the Lord had commanded the baptism of children, or prove that the apostles had baptized them, which he could not do. In return he asked me how long I had been baptized? I said "Not yet a year." He asked where and who had baptized me? but I did not tell
Matt xxvi. 63. him. He then adjured me three times by the living God, and by the baptism I had received, that I should tell him;
Matt. xxvi. 62. upon which I said that Caiaphas also adjured Christ. He said that Christ answered; I replied, "Christ spake of himself, but when he asked him of his disciples he did not answer." He then asked me what I held concerning their sacrament of the altar? I said that I regarded it no otherwise than impure, foul, offensive idolatry, and an abomination before God. He said "How? do you not believe that he is there in flesh and blood, like as he walked on earth, or as he hung on the gallows of the cross?" "God forbid," said I, "that I should believe that the flesh and
[248] blood of Christ are here on earth; for Christ himself said to his apostles that the poor we should always have with us, but himself we should not always have." He replied that he was not in that manner in the sacrament, but that it was in spiritual substance, and that I did not understand it; that his argument had been founded many hundred years before my time; for, when Christ instituted his supper, said he, he took the bread and gave it to his dis-
Matt. xxvi. 26. Luke xxii. 19. ciples, and said: *Take, eat; this is my body.* I said that the bread Christ gave to his disciples he gave as a symbol of his body that should be broken for them; that he described himself, in many places of the scripture, by re-
John xv. 1. semblances; for example, in John he saith, *I am the true vine.* In reality he was not a vine, but he compared himself to a vine; such was the bread which Christ brake with

his disciples, spiritually a figure of his body; for he saith, John vi. "Flesh and blood profit nothing, but the words that I speak are spirit and life." He replied, that it was not spoken in that sense; "for," said he, "if Christ be not there, how should men thereby eat their condemnation?" But I said, "If it were Christ's flesh and blood, men would not eat their own condemnation; for Christ himself saith, *Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life;* John vi. 54. therefore, these words must not be understood literally but spiritually, namely, if any one went to the Lord's supper with the church of Christ, of which Christ is the head, and he was still a drunkard, a covetous person, or an Eph. i. 22. idolater, or such like, that person would be unworthy to Gal. v. 19. break bread with the members of Christ, not discerning the 1 Cor. xi. Lord's body." He then said that there were amongst us 29. many drunkards, adulterers, and such like, and that he knew them well. I asked him, "Who?" he said, "J. de R." I asked where he lived? he said, "I shall not tell you." I replied, that I was sure that if there were any such persons in our church, and it was known, they would, according to the tenor of the scripture, be put away and excommunicated. He then asked me again who had baptized me, and 1 Cor. v. 12. when he could not draw it from me he adjured me, but I did not tell him. The recorder said: "I bet you a bottle of wine that you will, within fourteen days, tell it;" but I would not lay any wager. He then demanded of me how frequently I had partaken of the Lord's supper? I said that I had sometimes kept it, at convenient times, with many dear brethren and sisters. He inquired, "With whom? what are their names?" Of these I named one that he mentioned. He then inquired concerning others, whether I considered them as brethren, or if they were only friends or novices, for I have learned all these Flemish expressions," said he, "as novices, brothers, and friends." I said, "I thought you were from Brabant, as you knew so

much Flemish?" "I scarcely know," said he, "what I am; perhaps I am a foundling." "Yes," said I, "it is
Rev. xiii. 1. written in the Revelation of John that a beast rose up out of the sea; you may be of that progeny." He then asked me if I did not believe that Jesus Christ had not taken flesh and blood of Mary? I said that I believed that the
John i. 14. Word that in the beginning was with God, by whom the
Heb i. 2. world was made, became flesh; upon which he said that
Matt. xxii. 42. he was the Son of David according to the flesh. I said, "If he is David's Son, as Christ himself speaks, *how then doth David call him Lord?*" He replied that Christ quoted that to the pharisees only as an argument, but Matthew describes his genealogy from Abraham to Mary. I said that Matthew traces the genealogy of Christ only to
Matt. i. 16. Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Christ was born;
Luke iii. 23. and Luke says that Jesus was supposed to be the son of Joseph. "Yes," said he, "do you not believe that Mary was the mother of Christ?" I said, "Yes, I do; Christ
Matt. xii. 50. says: *Whosoever doth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother.*"

He then said that Christ was of the seed of the woman. I replied that women themselves had no seed; for, as the
1 Cor. xi. 12. woman is of the man, even so is the man by the woman. He then said that he was of the substance of Mary and of her blood; but I answered that Christ said to the Jews
John viii. 23. that he was from above, they were from beneath; *ye are of*
1 Cor. xv. 47. *the world*, said he; *I am not of the world.* The apostle likewise says that *the first man is of the earth, earthy; but the second man is the Lord* himself *from heaven*, and heavenly. I then told them that they should repent of their unrighteousness, persecution, and false idolatrous doctrine. They said, "We have the true doctrine." I answered that Paul, however, directs us to shun those who command to
1 Tim. iv. 2, 3. abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received of them that believe, and that forbid to marry, and whose

consciences are seared; *for it is better to marry than to burn;* 1 Cor. vii. 9. but you, on the contrary, and against the scripture, forbid to use meats and to marry, and would rather burn than marry.

Dean. "We do not forbid to marry."

Hans. "You do, though; you know that people by your command eat no meat during Lent, aud many other days, and may not marry; and you yourselves have made a covenant not to marry. But you are guilty of such [249] unchastity that it is a shame to speak of it; while Paul Eph. v. 12. says, that with such, namely, the unchaste, drunkards, 1 Cor. v. 11. &c., we should not eat, but give them over to the devil, for the destruction of the flesh."

Dean. "We are not so bad, we will not give them over to the devil; we are better than that."

Hans. "Poor man! will you be better than Paul? but it avails nothing, whatever may be said to you, for you will not amend; but if you will discuss these matters with us in the market, or in any public place, we are ready;" hoping that some one among the ignorant would thereby be profited.

Dean. "That cannot be, who could judge there? boatmen, fishermen, or the like, I suppose; that would be the way to raise tumult. However, we are foolish to talk so much with you; we ought only to state to you our faith, and if you do not believe it, to give you up to justice."

We had much more discourse on the invocation of saints, of the pope of Rome, of confession, fasts, purgatory, and the sleep of the saints, which it would be too long to write; but the above I have related as I remembered it. It is now a long time since, and I am not able to repeat it just word for word, and as I know well that whatever is said to them it avails nothing, they being 2 Tim. ii. 7. impudent and shameless, therefore I sometimes relate it

in the shortest manner. It was proposed to them to discourse publicly, which they refused. They asked many things, in the same form, of our brethren and sisters who are in bonds with us. They are all in good spirits, the Lord be praised. We stood in much greater awe of the false prophets before we conversed with them than afterwards; but the Lord knows how to give his elect a mouth to speak at such seasons, as he hath promised, better than we could think; for they who while at large appeared to be weak, are so valiant as to excite the wonder of those that see and hear it. The Lord alone be praised, for ever and ever. Amen.

Luke xxi. 14.

Rev. iv. 11.

The dean likewise asked me if we did not pray for him. I said, "Yes, we do." "What am I called," said he, "amongst you? Do you call me Saul?" I said, "I have sometimes heard you called the inquisitor (they all laughed), sometimes the Dean Ronse." To which he said, "That is my name." We had much further discourse, but, partly owing to want of paper, I write no more. I pray, however, all that see this to receive it from me in good part; and, if it be possible, send a copy to Antwerp to our friends there, and also one to those in the west.

All these twelve friends afterwards courageously laid down their lives for the truth. First, four of them piously offered their burnt offering in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Shortly after, six others were also brought forth, after a steadfast confession of their faith, and being asked if they still would not recant, answered "No;" but that if they had committed any crime, they wished to be dealt with accordingly. They were immediately condemned to death as heretics. As they were being carried in two waggons to execution, two monks sat with them, which prevented their speaking freely, so that with difficulty they said a word or two, namely, "Fear not them which kill the body, but after that they have no more

Rom. xii. 1.

1 Cor. xv. 51.

Matt. x. 28.

power; but, O ye people, repent, for the apostle saith, 'He that liveth after the flesh shall die.'" Mark i. 15. Rom. viii. 13.

When they were led into the small house, built of wood and straw, in which they were to be burned, they exhibited great joy, and commending their souls into the hands of God, put off their corruptible bodies, to put on the incorruptible. Luke xxiii. 46.

There were also two women who were pregnant, who, after their delivery and confinement, were both privately beheaded in the castle. Thus did all these, remaining steadfast to the end, enter into the rest of their Lord, and will come with him with everlasting joy, together with all the dear children of God.[z] Matt. xxv. 21. John i. 12.

MAEYKEN KATS, FROM WERWYK IN FLANDERS; MAGDALENE AECHTKEN, OF ZIERIKZEE; OLD MAEYKEN; GRIETKEN BONAVENTURE; AND MAEYKEN DE KORTE.—ANNO 1559.

The margrave of Antwerp, searching for one for whom three hundred guilders reward were offered, repaired on the 20th of May, 1559, with many officers and servants, to two houses, which they surrounded, and in which they found six sisters, namely, Maeyken Kats; Magdalene Aechten, of Zierikzee; old Maeyken; Grietgen Bonaventure; and Maeyken de Korte. But they could not find the individual they sought. The margrave wished these women at Hoboken heath. He led them all six [250] away and shut them up in a dark prison. They were afterwards examined, and boldly confessed their faith; neither the emperor's proclamation, nor threats or promises, induced them to recant, or to give information of any other person. Matt. xxvi. 46. Matt. xii. 50. Rom. xvi. 1. Acts xii. 3. Matt. x. 32. Heb. x. 39.

[z] [Het Offer. des Heeren, fol. 164—169.]

On the 18th of June, the first three were condemned to die, and were drowned by night in the prison.

Acts xii. 2. Afterwards, on the 11th of October, the other three were sentenced to die. Old Maeyken, that honourable widow, who was worthy of double honour, was drowned. Grietken Bonaventure, with Maeyken de Korte, had for the truth to taste of death by the sword, which is not John xiv. 6. customary in the case of women. Their Lord, whom John xiii. 3. they loved and did not forget, will not forget them. He Matt. xxii. 36. will receive them with joy into his kingdom, and at his Luke xxiii. 42. feast of gladness in paradise.

A Letter of Maeyken de Korte.

2 Thess. iii. 1. My dear sister, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be fruitful. Wait for him in Rev. xxii. 12. all patience and holiness. He that shall come will come, and bring his reward with him. He is faithful that hath 1 Thess. v. 24. promised, who also will do it. It is indeed as I say; our Job vii. 1. life is a perpetual conflict upon earth. Know that I am tolerably strong in mind; the body is pretty well, the 1 Cor. iv. 13. Lord be praised. We are regarded as accursed by the 2 Cor. v. 2. world, and always long to be at home in a house not made 2 Pet. iii. 13. with hands, but in heaven itself: *We look for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promise, wherein dwelleth righteousness.* How must we be prepared for such a glorified state! I find myself often cast down. I find in myself so many imperfections, and so much that must yet be crucified; all which I have to bring before the Lord with a humbled heart, and a trembling, dejected mind, 1 Cor. i. 27. and entreat for mercy, not for justice. I feel that the less I am in myself, the more doth the mighty God work in Phil. ii. 13. me, and pour his grace into my heart. Then I weep bitterly, and fall upon my knees, and thank my God,

and say, "O my Lord and God! What am I, a child of Adam, that thou shouldest be mindful of me? Thou hast crowned man with glory, and given him dominion over all thy works. Whence is it that thou so richly visitest us, and so bountifully openest thy treasures; and permittest the bright morning star to enter and arise in our hearts; and hast called us from this dark night into that unfading light?" What shall we, my dear sister, give to him in return, but a sorrowful and contrite heart, and a broken spirit, with love and great thankfulness? Therein (says David) the spirit of the Lord delights. Let us love one another fervently, for God is love; and ever exhort each other, that we wax not cold, through the deceitfulness of sin; that God may be glorified in us, and that we may be delivered from pride, and deceitful wicked persons; for all men have not faith; the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen and preserve us.

2 Pet. i. 19.

Psa. li. 17.

1 John iv. 8.

Matt. xxiv. 12.

Heb. iii. 13.

1 Thess. iii. 2.

1 Cor x. 13.

Know that my sisters have been here, and desired to have a word of comfort from me. The Lord hath still maintained the victory. I know not what ails me; they appear to me as strangers. I cannot, cannot rejoice, though I see them. Methinks they are afraid of me. They tried me very much, and sent Balten, a friar, to examine me, and promised him three cowls could he convert me. He came with fair speeches, but I would not speak to him; for I was at that time sick. My sisters then said, "Why do you not speak?" I replied, "I am not at present in the mind; we have conversed often with him: he knows our opinions well."

Luke xiv. 26.

Balten became angry, and launched out in complaints against me; that I had powerfully withstood the scripture, and that I expected salvation on unjust grounds, and had no hope. They wept much; but it made no impression on me, whether he spake or was silent. He made all

the people leave the room, and let my sisters remain with himself and me. He entreated me earnestly, saying, "My dear Maeyken, have compassion on your poor soul." I fearlessly replied, that I hoped to do so. "Say," said they, "that you are sorry, and that you have erred; that is enough; you need not say more. A note shall immediately be given you under my hand, and I will myself sign it, and both your brothers-in-law: it shall be kept private, and every thing possible shall be done for you; let it be done, my dear sister." I was moved, and said, "You may spare yourself your trouble; your efforts are all in vain. I am not in the mind to say that I am sorry.
Phil. iv. 13. So sorry am I, that if I had not done it, I would still do it.
Luke xiv. 26. I desire to remain steadfast, by the help of God. Neither
Rom viii. 38. prayers, nor pain, nor death, nor life, shall move me; I desire to die therein. Do not trouble me."

I would like, if it were permitted me, to speak to Laurence Huysmaker, and see all your faces; but I must
Luke xxi. 19. be patient.—To the Lord, and to the word of his grace,
[251] I commend you. Greet Andries for me; greet Matthews
Acts xx. 22. also; I salute you both; greet Laurence, greet Hans,
Rom. xvi greet heartily Adrian, for me; and Laurence's wife, and Laurence, the press-maker's wife, and Hansken's wife.

JELIS BERNARDS,

PUT TO DEATH AT ANTWERP.—A.D. 1559.

A Letter written to the brethren and sisters after he was sentenced to death.

[257] Grace and peace from God, our heavenly Father, and
1 Cor. i. 3. from his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil
Gal. i. 4. world, according to the will of his Father. To Him be
Rev. v. 13. glory, praise, honour, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever. Amen.

Most beloved wife and sister in the Lord, and all dear brethren and sisters of the church at Ghent, I have felt my heart inclined, since the sentence condemning me to death, to write a little to you, and to my beloved wife, whom I commend to you, and to the word of God, from a truly affectionate spirit, and genuine brotherly love, which I bear towards you even unto death. It is my 1 Pet. i. 22.
brotherly exhortation and writing to you all, that you should not fear them that can kill the body; for after Matt. x. 28.
that they have no more power. And, as Peter says, 1 Pet. iii 14.
Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, that ye be not stumbled; *but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*. And as he further says, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, *Think it not strange concerning the fiery* 1 Pet. iv. 12.
trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Rightly has the apostle exhorted us to rejoice; for I may truly write Matt. v. 12.
of it to you, it having been felt by me before death; although the sentence is pronounced upon me. First, I had great joy in my spirit when I was delivered over into their hands, although many thoughts and reflections Gal. v. 17.
burdened the flesh. I rejoiced in spirit that I was chosen of God to suffer for his name. Secondly, when I had Acts v. 42.
made confession of my faith before the magistrates, and was then severely tortured, I felt that God was with me; 2 Tim. iv. 17.
for he afforded me such power that, whatever sufferings and torments they inflicted upon me, they could draw nothing from my lips but what tended to the praise of the Lord, and to my salvation. They were, therefore, wroth, and asked if I would not yet reply? "For," said they, "we have power thus to torture you every day." I said, "The body is in your hands; do with it as you please." Jer. xxvi. 14.
And when this was done, my joy was exceeding great;

and I could not fully speak the praises of the Lord, nor sufficiently thank him for the grace which he bestowed, that I was counted worthy to suffer for his name, and to seal the word with my blood. For the marks I then received, and the pain I endured, remained in my limbs to the last; the Lord for ever be praised; for I had well deserved to be chastised for my sins and my evil deeds.

Ecclus. ii. 4. Acts v. 41. Gal. vi. 17.

Afterwards, I was twice led before a monk. The first time, he would know my faith. I said, "Ask the magistrates before whom I have confessed it." He began to bring forward much concerning the incarnation and baptism. When he had done, I asked him if he would defend his doctrine in reply to my questions; for I thought to prove to him the contrary. But he would not listen, and began to utter many slanderous things of Menno and his books, which he had read much, and, as he said, in which he found many lies. I said, "Fetch them here, and let us discourse upon them for a week." He replied, "You are not the man; we shall not take so much trouble with you." Much more discourse we had concerning his doctrine and church, too long to write. And thus I separated from him.

I was afterwards fetched once more, when another was with him. He discoursed much on the sacrament, baptism, and the incarnation. I said, "You would not let me defend myself when I was last with you; I do not therefore now wish to speak with you." He was not pleased, and said he would compel me to speak with the margrave's instruments, and asked if I was ashamed of my faith? I said, "I was not ashamed to confess it before the magistrates, but with you kind of people I wish to have nothing to do." We had agreed with each other to take this course, and I should advise every one to do so; for it is of little consequence what is said to them, for they are carnal men. After this I was condemned to

Rom. i. 16.

death. My joy was then full, so that I could not express the gladness I felt that my deliverance was so near. I took to myself the apostle's words; *Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy;* and as he further says, *Happy are ye, if ye suffer for the name of Christ; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you;* [258] *but on their part he is evil spoken of.* When I thought on this, and on other passages of scripture, and saw that tribulation and suffering would speedily pass away, and that such glorious promises were granted me, and that I should enter into rest with my dear brethren and sisters who had gone before, who lie under the altar, awaiting all our companions, brethren and sisters, that must yet follow us, contemplating this in the spirit, all my distresses vanished away.

1 Pet. iv. 13.

Rev. xiv. 13.

Rev. vi. 9.

Dear brethren, I do not write this to you from vain glory, but for the comfort and strengthening of your minds, that you may not fear them that can kill the body, for after that they have no more power; but that you should, dear brethren and sisters, be always courageous in mind, and ever be mindful of those who preceded you, who have spoken to you the word of God. Paul says, "Remember them who have gone before you, who have spoken to you the word of God; consider the end of their conversation, and follow their faith." Thus, my dearly beloved, be ever diligent to exhort one another with reading and prayer. *Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together,* but exhort one another to love and good works, and be knit closely together in love. *Use hospitality one to another.* Ever be of one heart and one soul, that when you come into bonds, if that should be the will of God, conscience may be clear.

Matt. x. 28.

Heb. xiii. 7.

1 Tim. iv. 13.

Heb. x. 25.

1 Pet. iv. 9.

I commend you to God and to the word of his grace.

Acts xx. 32.

Amen. Now adieu; adieu altogether, my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord.

Written by me, Jelis Bernards, to you, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, from the depth of my heart, and from real love. Amen.[a]

JAN BOSCH, OF BERG; OR JAN DURPS.

ANNO 1559.

This Jan Bosch, commonly called Jan Durps, was a pious, worthy man, a linen-weaver by trade, living at Maestricht. Though the truth was very much obscured
2 Cor. iv. 4. by the papacy, yet the light of divine grace shone into his mind, and genuine gospel truth was brought home to him. He repaired to the church of God, and yielded the
Mark xvi. 16. obedience which Christ, the Son of God, prescribed and commanded. After he had for a season adorned his Christian calling, the church ordained him, and the charge of it was entrusted to him, that by reading and exhortation he should serve them. After many refusals he con-
Matt. xxv. 15. sented, and discharged his duty with fidelity, and employed his talents to the best of his ability.

As this was conducive to the honour of God, and the building up of the church, Satan, who always opposes everything that is good and pleasing to God, sought to disturb the good work; and instigated his servants to lodge a complaint against this good man with the higher powers, as a heretic and an Anabaptist. The magistrates,
John xvi. 2. deceived by this spirit, and thinking to do God service, rashly proceeded in the matter. A burgomaster went with his officers (in open day) to the place where Jan Durps was sitting at work at his loom with his master,

[a] [Van Braght has also given three other letters of Bernards, addressed to his wife. Het Offer. des Heeren, fol. 77.]

and apprehended him. He led him through the town, to the Lants-kroon (which is the council-house), and there put him in confinement. He was immediately examined by the priests and monks, who assailed him in every way, and before whom he made a frank confession of his belief, and that he had, on confession of his faith in Christ Jesus, been baptized. In like manner he confessed what he held concerning the sacrament. All this he confessed according to the scriptures, and reproved them for their idolatrous practices. When examined before this petty council and the priests, after he had confessed his faith, and remained unchanged, they found the case to be so weighty, being a criminal cause, that they delivered him over to the sheriff's officer, who brought him to the prison gate. Jan remained there for some time in confinement. His wife sent him a letter while there, exhorting him to be comforted in his sufferings, and to abide faithfully by the truth, even unto death. He received it with thankfulness; and in return sent a message of comfort to his wife, exhorting her and the friends to abide together in the truth, and continue therein to the end. He also earnestly besought the prayers of the faithful. Many tortures were inflicted upon him, to draw from him who in the town were his brethren and held the same faith. But the Lord preserved his mouth, so that it cannot be learned that he named any individual, how severely soever he was tortured for that purpose.

1 Pet. iii. 15.

Mark xvi. 16.

2 Cor. i. 4.

Rev. ii. 10.

Mark viii. 13.

Eph. vi. 19.

The time at last arrived, when it was announced by his sentence that he must, agreeably to the emperor's proclamation, be burned alive to ashes. He heard it with composure of mind, and resigned himself to be bound and led between many officers with staves and halberts, which now and then were employed to strike the heads of any that came too near in order that they might hear what Jan said. On the way from the prison gate to the

Matt. xxvi. 47.

[259]

Vrythof,[b] he spoke much to the people, exhorting them to reflect that there had been a man amongst
Mark i. 15. them who had told them the truth. He urged upon them that they should repent, amend their lives, and seek the grace of God. On reaching the Vrythof where the scaffold had been set up, it was found to be full of train-bands, completely armed. All four of the city bands had been ordered to repair thither with their arms. Jan, with meekness, approached the scaffold, and the executioner led him into the small house, and kindled the fire in several places. While standing in the flames, Jan repeatedly exclaimed with a
Luke xxiii. 46. loud voice, "O Lord, into thy hands I commend my
Acts xxii. 20. spirit." Thus he was burned to ashes as a faithful witness of Jesus Christ.

This took place the 23rd of September, in the year of our Lord, 1559.

HANS VERMEERSCH, OTHERWISE CALLED HANS OF MAAS,

PUT TO DEATH FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, AT WAESTEN, IN FLANDERS.—ANNO 1559.

The confession of Hans Vermeersch, otherwise called Hans of Maas, which he wrote while lying a prisoner at Waesten, in Flanders, in the year 1559.

In the year 1559, in October, I was brought before the inquisitor, to make confession of my faith. He interrogated me concerning my age, and where I had been. Afterwards he asked me if I had been re-baptized. I said,
Eph. iv. 5. "I acknowledge but *one* baptism, as it stands in Ephesians,

[b] The proper name of a place in the city.

which is the baptism of those that believe, as taught by Matthew and Mark in their gospels. Peter also exhorts the people, *Repent* of your sins, *and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sins. They that gladly received his word were baptized.* Remark in the same chapter that it is said, and let it be read carefully over: They brake bread; fear came upon every soul; they were all of one mind, and had all things common, which a little child cannot do." He afterwards asked me, why I believed the gospel to be true? I answered, "Because, in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established. There are four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who all witness and speak in the same manner of one Christ and Messiah, who is the Son of God, and that God is his Father. That there is a God, is easily discerned in the creation of the world, and by the signs and wonders that we daily behold; as the making of the corn to grow—grass, apples, cherries, nuts, as we may see. It may further be affirmed that the gospel is true; for I read, *Blessed are ye, when men revile you and speak evil of you falsely, for my name's sake.* Christ also says, *Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.* When I read it I believed it, and I now find it to be true in myself and others; therefore, I believe the gospel to be true. Every one may know and understand the truth of what Paul says, *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* Therefore, I say, having all these witnesses, who cannot lie, it may fearlessly be affirmed, that the gospel is true. Let every one beware." On this they harassed me sorely. Afterwards they asked me concerning the Romish church; if I did not believe that it was the true church, built upon the rock, which is Christ. I said, "No." The inquisitor then asked me what church I believed to be the right. I said, "The assembly of the

Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38. Acts ii. 42. Acts iv. 32. Deut. xvii. 6. Matt. xiii. 16. Matt. xvi. 16. Rom. i. 19, 20. Matt. v. 11. [260] Matt. x 22. 2 Tim. iii 12. Matt. xvi. 18. Eph. v 25.

faithful in Christ's name, as Christ saith to Peter, *Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church;* that is to say, those that have the faith that Peter had, as may be seen in the Corinthians, where Paul says, *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said: I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Hence all believers that meet together in Christ's name, are the true church." They further asked me, if the sacrament, which the church uses in the mass, is not flesh and blood after the consecration of the priest? whether it be not the body of Christ, his true flesh and blood? I said, "How can that possibly be? for it is written in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that he ascended into heaven; and in the seventh chapter Stephen says, *I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* And Peter, in his first Epistle, third chapter, says, that he is risen again, and is *gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God;* so that he is not here." He then asked me, whether he is not able to be here by his divine power. I said, "He can do nothing contrary to his word. He is almighty, that I acknowledge; but contrary to his word, he does nothing." They then said, "When he held his supper with his disciples he gave them his body, as it stands in the text, for he said, *Take, eat; this is my body.*" To this I replied, "He did not give them his body, but a piece of bread; for we may observe, that his body was immediately delivered by Judas into the hands of the Jews, and suffered, and was hanged on the cross, he could not then give them his body to eat; he himself saith, *I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine;* that is wine, which just before he called blood. Read the Corinthians, 1st Epistle, 10th and 11th chapters, there you may obtain a fuller understanding of it. He did not then give his body to his apostles; but it signified

Matt. xvi. 18.
1 Cor. x. 14
2 Cor. vi. 16.
Matt. xviii. 18.
Acts i. 9.
Acts vii. 56.
1 Pet. iii 22.
Matt. xxvi. 26.
Matt. xxvi. 46, 56.
Matt. xxvi. 29.
1 Cor. x. 16, and xi. 23.

his body." Afterwards, he asked me what I thought of the service performed in the church? I replied, "I think it great and abominable idolatry." He then said, "You hold the church to be the whore of Babylon." I said, "Yes, as it is written in Revelation, ch. xiii. v. 4, concerning the beast which required the adoration of himself and whoever would not worship the same, or receive his mark in his hand or forehead, &c. They set themselves against God in his elect." He next said to me that we could not show that our church of anabaptists (as he called it) had existed above forty years, while their church has existed a much longer time than that, &c. To which I answered, "We do not record our church in any registers, like the Romish church. It might too soon be found. Every one seeks to destroy or to slay it. It has not, like the Romish church, the emperor or the king to support it; the emperor, or king, or prince, seeks with diligence to annihilate it. But I can easily show you that it has existed one thousand five hundred and fifty-nine years; for Christ is the foundation-stone, and has been since the time that he was crucified." Matt. xvi. 18. They then said, "Yes, the Romish church, for it was founded on Peter; he came first, afterwards all the holy popes; the holy doctors, as Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, Bernard, who are the four doctors of the holy church, will you not believe these very learned men?" I replied, "I believe in God's word alone."

They further asked me, if I did not believe in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost; three persons and one true God? I said, "I find but one person in the Scripture." They asked who that was? I said, "Christ, John ix. 37. whom men have seen and heard, but the Father hath no John i. 18. man ever seen. Who then is able to say what person he 1 Tim. i. 17. is? for he is invisible. The Holy Ghost likewise has no man ever seen. He was seen descending as a dove upon Matt. iii. 16. Christ, but a dove can be no person." They then said,

"You do not believe that there are three persons?" I said, "No, unless it be shown me from the scriptures. I acknowledge three in essence, yet but one true God. The
Deut. vi 4. Father is not the Son, nor is the Son the Holy Ghost.
John xvii. 8. The Father I acknowledge as the Father; Jesus Christ
John xv. 16. as the Son coming forth from him; the Holy Ghost from both the Father and the Son; but nevertheless one undivided and true God."

[261] He then asked me, "If Christ had not taken flesh and blood of Mary?" I said, "That must be proved." They answered, "He is of David's seed?" I said, "The scriptures do not testify that he took his flesh and blood of Mary. Read Luke, in the first chapter, where the angel
Luke i. 27. saith, *Thou shalt conceive;* and afterwards, when Mary
Luke i. 30, 31. said, *How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? The angel answered and said, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be*
1 Cor. xv. 47. *called the Son of God.* Remark, he says, *That holy thing.* Further, Paul says, *The first Adam is of the earth, earthy; but the second is the Lord from heaven.* In Heb. x. 5, Paul also says, *Wherefore, when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me.* See further, John xvi. 28, where
John v. 29. Christ saith, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world*, and many other places; as in the 8th and 9th
John i. 14. chapters. Search the scripture, John's gospel, and the
1 John i. 1. Epistles." He then asked me, if He had received no substance from Mary, when suckling? I said, "That
Luke ii. 22. she presented him as he was born: she wrapped him in
Luke ii. 7. swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. We further find, that she felt anxious concerning him, as when he,
Luke ii. 42. being twelve years old, was lost. They sought him on their return from Jerusalem: it is said that they sought him diligently, and were sorrowful." He then asked me, if he had not been suckled.

Ans. "Christ said, when the woman exclaimed, *Blessed are the paps which thou hast sucked! Yea, woman, blessed, rather, are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*" Luke ii. 27, 28.

Qu. "What *do* you think? Say, what is your opinion?"

Ans. "As I find no answer thereto in the scripture, I dare not speak concerning it; opinion is of no value."

He further asked me, if Christ was not of David's seed. I said, "How could he be of David's seed? for Christ himself said, when the Pharisees asked whose son he was, if he was not David's son, &c., *How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?* where he says, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.* David calls him his Lord, *how is he then his son?*" To this they knew not what reply to make. I then said, "I acknowledge that he was born *from* David's seed, not *of* David's seed." They said, "It is written (Gal iv.) that he was made of a woman." I replied, "It appears strange that a woman should *make* a child; do not all other scriptures say, born or proceeding *from* a woman?" He replied, "I can show, from forty places, that he was of David's seed:" but he would not attempt it. I said, "Therefore, if she conceived him of the Holy Ghost, he cannot be of David's seed." He further asked me, where men went when they departed from this world. I said, "They sleep in the Lord, *i. e.* the faithful, as the scriptures testify." He asked, again, whither the souls went. I answered, "Paul says, that he was willing to absent from the body and be present with the Lord; such is my mind." He then asked, where the other souls went. Matt. xxii. 41. Ps. 110. Rom. i. 3. Luke i. 35. Acts vii. 60. 2 Cor. v. 8.

Ans. "The scriptures give no information on that matter; I cannot therefore say where they go."

c [This strict adherence to the letter of scripture by the Baptists brought upon them the framers of articles and creeds. The obligation on conscience of inferences deduced from the text of scripture

Qu. "What do you think; they go somewhere?"

Ans. "I leave that to the providence of God."

He then asked me what I held concerning the resurrection of the dead. I said, "As it stands in the 15th Corinthians, 1st Epistle; there Paul says, that this

1 Cor. xv. 53. *corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*, and that this same body shall thus rise again." He knew not what to say in reply. He then asked me where children went who died unbaptized? I said, "Where it pleases God." He asked if they were saved?

Matt. xix. 14. *Ans.* "Christ blessed little children and said, *Of such is the kingdom of heaven.*"

Qu. "You say, then, that they are saved?"

Ans. "If they possess the kingdom of heaven they are happy indeed."

Qu. "See! they are damned, that is clear."

Ans. "In the fifth chapter to the Romans it is written;

Rom. v. 18, 19. *As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.*"

He likewise asked me if I did not wish to be subject to the ruling powers.

Ans. "Yes, gentlemen, so far as they are not contrary

Acts v. 29. to God's command; for Peter says *We ought to obey God rather than men.*" He then inquired "whether I would swear before the magistrates."

Ans. "No."

was strongly insisted on by the divines of the Roman and Protestant churches. Spanheim thus states the question:—"An is tantum pro genuino admittendus sit, qui totidem litteris et syllabis expressus est, an vero etiam ille, qui *per consequentias* et illationem unius ex alio educitur? Prius affirmant Anabaptistæ, negant posterius. Orthodoxi prius negant, affirmant posterius. Disp. Theol. xxi. Thesis 2. The Baptist view of this question is the only true Protestant principle.]

Qu. "You ought to be subject to the ruling powers; Paul and Peter teach that."

Ans. "Christ saith, *Swear not at all; let your words be Yea*, that is, *yea; and nay*, that is, *nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;* also, 2 Cor. i.; James v." He afterwards asked if we were not bound to speak the truth. Matt. v. 34. James v. 12.

Ans. "Yes, truly."

Qu. "Tell me your companions."

Ans. "To criminate our neighbour is not the truth; Christ doth not teach that." He then adjured me by Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, that I should name them. I said "I heed not your adjuration; it is magician's work." He then said that we were bound to act contrary to the command of God on account of the adjuration. 1 John iii. 16. Matt. xxvi. 63. [262]

They pressed me hard with the case of those that brought the sick of the palsy, saying: "Through the faith of them that brought him his sins were forgiven; and thus it is with children in baptism, through the faith of the father and mother." But Christ does not say through the faith of them that brought him; but it is only written, *When Jesus saw their faith.* Matt. ix. 2. Mark ii. 5.

From love I have thus written you at length; if I have not written properly take it in good part, but I think I have written agreeably to scripture. Farewell; I send all the friends a very hearty salutation, beseeching them to pray for me. I am in good spirits, the Lord be praised. The grace of the Lord be with you all. Amen. Rom. xvi. 15. 1 Thess. v. 25. Rom. xvi. 23.

ANDRIES LANGEDUL, MATTHEUS POTTEBACKER, AND LAURENS OF LEIJEN.—ANNO 1559.

At Antwerp were apprehended for the truth, three brethren, named Andries Langedul, Mattheus Pottebacker, Matt. xii. 50.

and Laurens of Leijen. This Andries Langedul was taken at a time when there was a meeting in his house, to hear the preaching of God's word; which, having been by some one spied out, the margrave came thither just as the assembly was dispersed. He was apprehended as he was sitting in his hall reading the bible.

Matt. xxvi. 49.

His wife was at that time ill in her confinement, which was perceived by the margrave on entering her chamber, for the midwife had the infant in her lap, the woman having been just delivered. On seeing this, the margrave left the room, but apprehended the women who had come to assist. The lying-in-woman he left in charge of some of his officers. Her apprehension was, however, prevented by the nurse, who, being grieved on her account, so occupied the attention of the officers, distributing wine freely to them, that, without their knowledge, the woman was carried, by means of planks, across a fountain (which was common to two neighbours), and then taken from her neighbour's house to Christian Langedul's (her husband's brother's), whose wife was confined at the same time.

Acts xxii. 19.

We are not acquainted with the day on which this Andries Langedul was apprehended; but he offered himself up as a sacrifice with Mattheus Pottebacker, and Laurens of Leijen, on Thursday, the 9th of November, anno 1559. They were beheaded, not publicly, but in the prison. The other prisoners (of whom there were then many) could see it through the windows of their cells.

[263] When Andries knelt to receive the stroke of the sword, he put his hands together, saying, *Father, into thy hands I commend*—but *I commend my spirit* was not perfectly uttered, the rapid stroke of the sword preventing it. These three were thus brought together to death as sheep of Christ to the slaughter.

Luke xxiii. 46.

Ps. xliv. 22. Rom. viii. 36.

This Laurens of Leijen, wrote some letters in prison, of which these that follow have come to hand:—

The first letter of Laurens of Leijen.

Grace and peace be to all the brethren that live at Embden; in particular to my two brothers, and Tonijntgen, Lieven's wife. The Lord Jesus Christ confirm you, and each of us, by his divine Spirit. Amen. Rom. i. 7. Acts xii. 3.

I, Laurens of Leijen, apprehended the 21st of May, for the testimony of Jesus Christ, confessed my faith on the day following, before the magistrate, Master Claes. He came alone, hoping that I should speak as he wished; but the Lord guarded my mouth. Being asked to whom I had made confession at Easter, and when I received the sacrament, I replied, "To Mr. Lieven Biestman, but not at Easter last; for he has been dead two or three years." It was asked me, "Do you not believe that God, in flesh and blood, is in the sacrament?" I said, "No." "What, then, do you esteem the sacrament to be?" Matt. x. 12.

Ans. "An idol." It was asked me, if I did not believe in the Romish church, of which the pope is the head. I said, "No, I do not; for I loathe the church of Rome; she is altogether opposed to the truth. I believe in the apostolic church, of which Christ is the head." "What do you hold concerning infant baptism?" "I regard it as worthless, and improperly practised. I renounce my first baptism." "So then you have not been baptized?" I said, "No." "Is baptism then not necessary?" "I said, "Yes, it is necessary to perfection." "Why then have you not been baptized?" I said, "I was not then fit." He then said, "Why?" "Because I was too much entangled with this world; and I was, and still am, much in debt. I thought if I should be apprehended, people will say I am a deceiver, and many will be stumbled Eph. i. 22.

thereby. On this account I have remained unbaptized; but I esteem it necessary and right. I wish to live and die in that judgment. And though I have not received it, the Lord will of his compassion save me through his sufferings and precious blood. I believe all that a Christian man is bound to believe. To that I will adhere. You may do with me as you please; for I am now in your power."

Matt. xxvi. 24.
Eph. i. 7.
Jer. xxvi. 14.

It was further asked me what I believed concerning the incarnation; whether I believed that Christ came of Mary's flesh and blood. I said, "I believe, as the scriptures testify, John i. and Luke i." And I recited the same at length. With the recital the subject dropped. This was the heaviest storm; it lasted two or three hours.

On the 24th day of May, the Dean Ronse came himself with two others, and addressed me in a kind manner, saying, "Laurens, you must allow yourself to be instructed; you ought not to rely upon ignorant people, who have been knitting stockings these thirty or forty years."

I said, "What do you mean about my relying on men? He that trusts in man is accursed, as the scriptures say. I fix my hope alone on God, and his living word; to that I will adhere as long as God gives me life." With many words they endeavoured to prove to me that God was in the sacrament; but I would in no wise believe it. We then separated, having been together as much as two hours.

Jer. xvii. 4.
1 Tim. vi. 17.

Written in haste, by me, Laurens of Leijen, the 25th May, A.D. 1559.

The second Letter of Laurens of Leijen.

2 Tim. i. 2.

Grace and peace be multiplied to you, my dearly beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord. Be it known to

you that I have again been examined. The margrave wished to draw much information from me. I said, "I am willing to speak freely of what concerns my faith." He said, "You must tell me every thing." I asked, "What do you wish to know?" He then said, "What do you hold concerning the baptism of children?" I replied, "I do by no means approve of it." He then asked me, where it was written that children should not be baptized. I said, "In Mark xvi. 15, Matt. xxviii. 19." He became very angry, and asked me, "What do you hold concerning the seven sacraments?" I said, "I have never read any thing about them." He repeated the question twice or thrice. I replied, "I have never read of them; but I believe that Christ sits at the right hand of his Father, where I hope to be with him in due time." Matt. xii 50. Mark xvi. 19 James v. 8.

He afterwards asked me concerning auricular confession. I said, "I acknowledge confession; but I do not approve of auricular confession. I confess every day before my heavenly Father." The anger of the margrave being excited, he said that he would have me fastened to a stake, or thrown into the water. I told him he should do with me as he would; for my body was in his power. He then said that he would send other learned men to me. I answered him that my faith was settled, my mind was made up. He said, "You will certainly receive what they say." I answered, "Though you should cut me in pieces, I trust that I shall not forsake my God." The margrave, with his assistants, was much incensed with me. One said he would put me into a galley. I replied, "Do with me what you please." To which the margrave replied, "I will not be so lenient to him; we will have him fastened to the stake." I said, "I will recall my former sentence;" and related to him that when I was last imprisoned, it was forbidden me, on pain of being beheaded or burned, to Matt. vi. 9. [264] Jer. xxvi. 14. Acts viii. 3.

sing any more spiritual hymns; and that I was admonished to take care not to be one of such people; but I did not heed this, because I am now bolder; for had that never been forbidden me, I desired not to forsake my Lord and my God.

The margrave then asked me, "Is your mother likewise one of them?" I answered, "I would she were." I said further, "When I used to gamble and be intoxicated, and follow the world, I was then left in peace; but now that
Matt. x. 32. I confess the name of God, I am persecuted. But it is as the prophet Esaias says, Truth is fallen in the streets, and that which is light and clear may not ap-
Isa. lix. 15. pear; yea, he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey."

One of the justices then said to me, "Did you ever steal?" On which I asked him two or three times, "Have you ever heard such a thing of me?" He gave me no answer. They then began to speak to me kindly; "If you will only recant what you have spoken here, we will tear this paper in pieces, and extend our clemency to
Eph. i. 13. you." The margrave said, "You know well how it fared with your sister, whom I had thrown into the Scheldt." I replied, that she had died for the truth's sake; that for
Matt. x. 33. myself, I would not deny my Lord and my God who created and fashioned me; I would rather suffer them to do what they pleased. The margrave then said, "Do you think we cannot read? we read the scriptures daily; but these cobblers and tailors would be wiser than we: I am very glad that I have you in my hands; for, without doubt, the Lord God sent you to that house that I might punish you for an example to others;" and he called me many vile names, and added, "You have many times eaten and drunk in my house, I am sorry that it did not choke you." He asked me, "If you were not a prisoner, would you be baptized?" I said, "If you will release me

to-morrow, I will do my best to be baptized, for it is the duty of believers." Mark xvi. 16. Acts viii. 36.

He then asked me, "Will you confess anything else?" and interrogated me concerning princes, and lords, and the pope of Rome; to which I replied: "I hold God Almighty to be the supreme Creator and my King." The margrave then said: "I have at home a little book covered with chamois leather." I said, "Sir, that book belonged to me; if you read it you will learn what our faith is." He answered me, saying: "It was first made known by the pope of Rome;" I said, "That I regard as nothing, but it is the Testament, and is left us by God as a remembrance." He became angry and fell into a passion with me, saying: "I heartily wish I had never in my life seen you," and added in a fury; "Depart; I and these gentlemen, the aldermen, came here to instruct you, but we will send you other learned men." I then thanked him heartily for the trouble they had taken.

My dear friends, I fear them not, however they may threaten me. It is said in Luke xvii. 33, *He that seeketh to save his life shall lose it; but he that loseth it for my sake shall find it.* They thought to distress me sore, but I did not fear them; I hope shortly to leave the body; my dear friends, fear not them that here kill the body, but fear Him who hath made and formed you, and who hath power to cast you into hell fire for ever. Matt. x. 39. Luke xii. 5.

I commend you to the Lord; may the mighty hand of God lead and keep you, my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord. They likewise asked me if I should be saved, not having received baptism; to which I said, "Yes, for I hope the Lord will accept my willingness as he accepted Abraham's." My brethren and sisters, pray for me, that I may, by God's help, remain steadfast to the end; I hope that you regard me as a brother, although I have not attained to perfection. Gen. xxii. 10. 2 Thess. iii.

Written by me, Laurens of Leijen, the 10th July, 1559, in Antwerp.

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[265] *A short confession of faith, and a part of the discussion I, Laurens of Leijen, had, on the 4th July, 1559, with the justices at Antwerp and the Dean Ronse. Should I relate the whole here it would be much too long.*

Gen. xxi. 33 A confession of faith in God, who is from eternity, and will exist for ever, without beginning and without end, who alone is and was the same, the everlasting, than whom there is none other. The same I confess to be the everlasting God; the eternal Father, also his eternal Son, with his eternal Spirit, I acknowledge to be one; he is the perfect God, and besides him there is no other, viz. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, John i. 5. According to my faith, and the testimony of the holy scripture, they are one,
John i. 1. Amen; the Almighty eternal God, together with his eternal omnipotent Son, who is also the Word of the Father. To this great, incomprehensible, irreproachable,
John i. 18. and invisible God, who by his eternal Word made the
Col. i. 16. world, and without whom nothing was made that is made, in heaven and earth, whether invisible or visible; and to this eternal Son, who is the Word of the Father, be glory from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

John xvii. 5. Of him we speak, of the eternal Son who was with his Father, and was existing with him or in divine form, by whom, and with whom he eternally wrought; for by
Heb. i. 2. him was the world made and all that therein is; and without him was nothing made. To this eternal Son, who is one with his eternal Father, who is the beginning of
Rev. iii. the creation of God, without beginning and without end, to him be praise and glory from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

When God made man he created him like himself, and

made him head over all things, and gave him a commandment which he was not to transgress. But man being frail, and the devil subtle and crafty, and appearing under a specious form to man, fell into the sin of unbelief. By man thus transgressing sin was brought into the world. He was ashamed, and hid himself from the presence of God. Thus the curse came upon the whole world, so that God said, *Cursed is the ground for thy sake.* Man has remained under the curse; so that none could make reconciliation for sin. For it was impossible to man, because according to the tenor of scripture he was weak through the flesh, and by the flesh was overwhelmed with sin, being encompassed by the infirmity of imperfection. Sin could not, therefore, be taken away or atoned for by any of the human race, for they were all overwhelmed in sin. And inasmuch as it was not possible for man to reconcile himself, God promised his only Son; as was declared at sundry times by the prophets to the people, that he would raise up Jesus the Saviour, whom he had promised through many generations, as is found written, Matt. i. This promise was in process of fulfilment from Abraham to Jesse, the father of David; from David to Jacob, Joseph's father, the husband of Mary, that pure virgin, honoured of God. She also waited for the promise that the Saviour should be raised up. She was not unbelieving when the angel said to her, *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; he shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest.* Here is an assurance that the promises which he had given from generation to generation are accomplished, being fulfilled in that generation. Thus was fulfilled the word, Acts xiii. 22; *I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.* Of this man's seed was born the Saviour Jesus, the Son of the Highest. Although he existed before, he

Gen. ii. 16.
Gen. iii. 1.
Wis. ii. 24.
Gen. iii. 10
Gen. iii. 17.
Rom. viii. 3.
Gen. iii. 15, and 22, and xxvi. 4.
Luke i. 30.
Matt. i.

Gal. iv. 4. was manifested in the last times for our redemption, to
John xi. 52. gather together the dispersed. Concerning him Paul has told us that God had often promised afore, in the holy
Rom i. 3. scripture, his Son, who was born *of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness.*

One of the justices said to me, "If Christ be not of Mary's flesh, the promise is not yet fulfilled." I answered, "It is not written that Christ was made of Mary's flesh." The dean said, "It *is* so written, therein you lie; for it is written, *That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* Again: *A virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son.* Again: *He was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.*" I said, "Gentlemen, it is so; but it is not expressed as you have stated it. Hear, gentlemen; I lay it down as a thing I know. He grossly called me a liar; yet it is not so written." He said again, "You lie." I answered, "If I were disposed to call you a liar I
Luke i. 26 might do so." I said, "Gentlemen, listen:—*The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the*
266] *virgin's name was Mary.* She was still a pure virgin. *And the angel came in unto her, and said; Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son; he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* Mary said, *How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? The angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* That which she conceived was of
Matt. i. 20. the Holy Ghost. Of his being of Mary's flesh there is not a word." The first justice said again, "The promise then

is not yet fulfilled." But I replied, "It is fulfilled; if you will hear me I will show it you." I told him that the Saviour and Redeemer is come, and suffered much for our sakes, as the Saviour hath himself declared, John iii *God so loved the world, that he spared not his only begotten Son, but gave him up for us all, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Thus he came into the world, and has given us an example that we should follow his steps. Rom. viii. 32. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

"Once more, Zacharias rightly said, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people; and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.* Thus we find that the promise is fulfilled; but that Christ is of Mary's flesh, that we do not find written." The dean Ronse asked me, "How did he then become flesh?" I replied, "He who from eternity was with his Father, by whom all things were created and made that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible; yea, the living word of the Father, who was with the Father; the same came from his celestial kingdom and became man; and thus entered into the world, and redeemed us with his own blood." The dean inquired, "Was he then changed?" I told him, "As it is written, *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*" The dean said to me, "Thou art of the basest sect that ever was upon earth." I told him, in presence of all the justices on the bench, that he was of a vile sect, and "I will show you that you are a sect, for you Luke i. 68. Micah v. 2. John i. 3. 1 John i. 1. John i. 14. Rev. i. 5. John i. 14.

cannot prove a single point that you maintain, by the word
Matt. xv. 13. of God. Christ saith, *Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.*" I then asked him where he found written the institutions which they maintain, namely, the baptism of bells; the shaving of heads; the consecration of water; one wearing shoes with holes, another stockings without feet; each one by himself, but the whole of which is without the sanction of the word of God. I said, further, "Gentlemen, I have offered to dispute publicly, from the holy bible, before the whole bench." The dean said to me, "You shall be put into a sack, and be smothered, with a ball in your mouth." I said, "You hypocrite; do you not fear the word of the
Isa. xi. 4. Lord, which is written, *I will slay the unmerciful with the*
Prov. xxviii. 17. *breath of my lips?* And, once more, *He that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall not be preserved, though he*
Matt. xxiii. 33. *should flee to the pit. Ye serpents; ye generation of vipers;*
Matt. iii. 2. *how can ye escape the damnation of hell?* Repent ye, and believe the gospel, for your days may possibly be few." He asked me, how I knew the gospel to be gospel. I answered, "That is a wonderful question! but if you will hear me, I will tell you. Should I not know (said I), that it is gospel, since the Almighty God spake and taught, *Repent, and believe the gospel,* Matt. iv.; Mark i.; and Rom. i.; and came from his celestial kingdom, and suffered so
2 Cor. viii. 9. much on account of our sins? Yea, *He who was rich be-*
Matt. xvi. 24. *came poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich.* He called men to follow him, and commanded his apostles to preach the same throughout the world: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,* Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15; *and he that believeth not shall be damned.*" They asked, how I knew that his apostles had written that; and said, "Other persons printed it. You have not seen or spoken to the apostles; how, then, do you know it?
[267] there are other evangelists that you have not seen; how

do you know, then, that *this* is the gospel? men have compiled this as they liked."

Oh, crafty devil! thought I, in my heart. I replied to them, that the holy scriptures were given by the Holy Spirit, and not without the Holy Spirit; for Paul says, *I will not dare to speak of any thing which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed.* Rom. xv. 18. The apostle Peter has said, that no prophet ever produced any scripture from human choice, *but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* 2 Pet. i. 20. Thus the Holy Spirit testifies to us, that the gospel we have is the word of the living God, which he hath given us, that we should live according thereto, and be saved in the last day. For we read, that these words *are written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name.* John xx. 31.

A monk asked me concerning infant baptism, if I did not approve of it. I said, "Baptism does not belong to children, but to believers." Mark xxi. 15. He asked, "Are children then lost? I said, "No; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xix. 14. He said, "Those that are not baptized are damned." I said, "That is not in scripture; nor that children should be baptized." He replied, "It is." I answered, "It is not; children, indeed, have not faith; but they are sure of eternal life." Matt. xix. He said, "It is written, Except ye are born of water and of the Spirit, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God." John iii. 5. I replied, "They cannot be born again, for they have no sins." He said, "They have; for it is written, That all are under sin." I asked, what sins children have? He said, "Original sin." I asked him, "Why did Christ die?" He said, "He had done enough; but we must first be baptized before original sin can be taken away." I said, "That is contrary to God's word; for when John saw the Lord coming to him, he said, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.*

John i. 29, 30. *This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man that was before me.* Of him, likewise, it is written, that he *His*
1 Pet. ii. 24. *own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* John
1 John iii. 5. also teaches us, *That he was manifested to take away our*
Rom. iii. 24. *sins.* Paul said that they should be *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*
Col. i. 14. Again, Paul says that we should give thanks to him *who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of*
Heb. i. 3. *sins!* Yea, says the apostle, *He upholds all things by the word of his power, and hath by himself purged our sins.*
Rom. v. 8, 9, 11. And again, Paul says, *Herein God commendeth his love towards us, that Christ died for us when we were sinners; much more shall we be saved from wrath, now that we are justified by his blood,* and thus reconciled unto him. He says, *As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, justification of life is come upon all men.* Even as the
Isa. liii. 7. prophet Esaias has said, that he hath taken our sins upon him."

They asked me if I had fully considered the matter? I inquired what I should have considered. They said, "Your errors." I replied, "I do not err; I trust in the living God; in his holy word, and in nothing else; and from that I will not depart. For Christ hath said,
Matt. xxiv. 13. *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.*" They said, Will then none be saved but you and your people, who began only twenty or thirty years since? our church has existed more than 1400 years, and has continued one; must we all be damned?" I said, "The word of the Lord, more ancient than your church and people, and which
John xii. 48. will judge all men, will judge you in the last day. It
Matt. xxviii. 20. was given us by his Holy Spirit, that we should observe all things that he hath commanded us. They who will

not observe them have no promise of eternal life. He will render to them *indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish.* Yea, he will take *vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* and be punished with everlasting destruction. We must believe, therefore, all that is taught and written by the Holy Ghost; for *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for reproof, for doctrine, for instruction, and edification, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished unto all good works.* We are thus assured, by the holy scriptures that we have, that they were written by the apostles through the Holy Ghost: as Peter says, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty, when he received from God his Father honour and glory, by a voice which said to him, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear him.* Ought we not then to believe that which he says, *We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well to take heed?* Therefore we take heed to these words."

Rom. ii. 8. 2 Thess. i. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 19. [268]

They then asked me concerning the sacrament of the altar. I said that I found nothing written concerning it; but I did concerning a supper which the Lord held with his disciples, when the time was arrived that he should fulfil that for which he came, that what had been written concerning him might be accomplished; and that he should return again from whence he had come. When it was two days to the Passover, he said, "The Son of man shall be delivered to be crucified." His disciples inquired, "Where wilt thou that we eat the paschal lamb?" He told them the place, and went with them. As they were eating, he took bread, and gave thanks, and said, "Eat, this is my body." In like manner he took the cup, saying, "Drink ye all of it; this is my blood of the new

Matt. xxvi. 19. Mark xiv. 17. Luke xxii. 14.

testament, that shall be shed for many, this do in remembrance of me." I further asked them, "Did each one eat his body, as he was there with them in flesh and blood?" They said, "Yes, they there ate his flesh, and drank his blood." I asked them once more, "How did they eat him, if he was there with them. Did they, each one, eat a Christ?" They said, "Yes, just the same as he hung on the cross." I said to them, "He had but one body, and that had to be given for the redemption of the sins of the world, and was delivered into the hands of the Jews. They hung him on the cross, and put him to death, and he thus redeemed us by his blood, as it is written, *His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree*." They said, "That he was still with them, the same as when he hung on the cross." I said to them, "I do not believe it, that so great a Saviour can be eaten by you; a people who are opposed to God's word, full of wickedness, and disobedient to the word of the Lord. I believe that he is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God his Father. From thence we expect him to come again. You have him not, for in order that you should have him again, he must again be crucified. You, therefore, are not to be believed, you all act contrary to God's word. It is written that the apostles of God kept the supper, believing with one accord, and were also of one mind, and that they remained steadfast in the things of God that they had seen; yet they have neither taught nor said that they ate Christ's flesh and drank his blood, as he hung on the cross. But they taught that he was ascended into heaven, and was seated at the right hand of God; *that* they taught. All that they taught was by the power of the Holy Ghost; and they remained steadfast in the faith of what God had commanded them. No other foundation can be laid, than that is laid, which is Christ. That his apostles laid, and on that they built;

1 Pet. i. 20, and ii. 24.

Rev. xvii. 14.

Acts i. 9.

Phil. iii. 20.

Acts iv. 31.

1 Pet. ii. 2. Mark xvi.

1 Cor. iii. 11.

and I will never depart from it. I further said to them, "If you wish to speak or dispute with me publicly, with the holy scriptures, I will, by God's help, meet you. Who is in the right will then be seen, and let him who is in the wrong confess openly that to this day he hath taught false doctrine."

This is but a small part of the discussion we had with the justices, bailiff, and clergy.[d]

The third Letter of Laurens van der Leijen.

The peace of God be with you. Amen.

Grace and peace be with you from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Gal. i. 3.

Very kind salutation, with the peace of God, to you my dear brother, Nathanael. I, your imprisoned brother, Laurens, wish you the grace of the Lord for a salutation; and inform you, that my mind is tolerably comfortable, the Lord be praised. I trust it will remain so unto the end, by the grace of the Lord. Thus I hope to appear in the day of the Lord. We are in daily expectation of release from these our bodies. I send you also two hymns that Laurens, the hat-maker, has composed in his Acts xv. 11. Col. iv. 17.

[d] [Brandt relates the following incident concerning the dean Ronse, the inquisitor and examiner on this occasion. It was his custom to traverse the town with two servants only, when searching for and arresting the Baptists. An officer it is said met him on one of these expeditions and asked, How he durst venture with so few assistants to apprehend those heretics; he was wont to go on his duties well attended and well armed. The Dean replied: "I have nothing to fear; my business is only to take good people, who bear no arms, nor make any resistance." "If you," was the reply, "take all the good men, and I the bad, we shall stock the prisons bravely between us." Hist. of Ref. i. 127.]

2 John 8. bonds. My dear brother, let us ever hold fast *those things which we have wrought, that we may receive a full reward.* [269] Let us not be dissuaded, for we are certain that we have the truth, and that through eternity none other shall be found. Of this we have the testimony of our consciences, and I am heartily sorry that I wasted my time so long 1 John v. 19 with the wicked and blind world, and not employed it differently; but, although I have not devoted a long time thereto, and nevertheless am in confinement, yet I hope Acts xv. 11. to keep that I have, trusting in the grace of the Lord, Heb. xiii. 5. that he will not forsake me.

I should have written much more to you, my dear Isa. liv. 13. brother, but you are yourself taught of the Lord and know John vi. 45. the truth. See that you abide in it; the Lord make you and all friends steadfast.

Acts xx. 32. I commend you to the Lord and to the word of his grace; we twelve prisoners together greet you all with the peace of the Lord:

Andries Langedul, Sander Hendriks, Anthonis Claess, Hans de Luykener, Mattheus de Pottebacker, Laurens van der Leijen, Laurens the hatter. Females: Adriaentgen, Jochem's wife, Kallken Laurens, the pressmaker's wife, Claertgen, Jan Beun's wife, Catelyntgen, Laurens the hat-maker's wife, Maeyken Andries, Langedul's maid, and Grietgen Bonaventure, the old Maeyken, and Maeyken de Korte.—By me, Laurens van der Leijen.

Salute for me much, all the friends, particularly Tanneken and Pierijntgen, at the Blind Ass; Maeyken, Andries' maid. Greet Tanneken very heartily; Laurens the hat-maker, and his wife, greet Prijntgen with the peace of the Lord.

I, Laurens your brother, say, adieu; my dear brother, adieu.

The fourth Letter of Laurens van der Leijen.

The peace of God be with you, Amen.

Grace and peace be with you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. *Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ;* but whether we have tribulation or comfort, all is for good. If tribulation, it is for your comfort and salvation, which salvation is effectual. Do you suffer in any measure, that is, to your comfort and welfare; therefore, *our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as you are partakers of the suffering, so shall you be also of the consolation.*

Rom. i. 7. 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5. 2 Cor. i. 7.

Kind salutation, with the peace of the Lord, to you my dear brothers, Nathanael and Lieven. I present my hearty respects to you, and inform you that I am tolerably well in spirit. God be praised for his great mercy, which he hath so abundantly shown toward me in having delivered me from this present evil world; and that, although you have seen me living in exceeding great wickedness, the light of truth is now manifested to me, for which I heartily thank the Lord, and by which, by the grace of the Lord, I hope also to abide; for, my dear brother, know that we have nothing of our own, all must come from the Lord; for he saith, *He that seeketh to save his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my name's sake shall save it.* We have a high priest, Jesus the Son of God, who is gone into heaven; *let us,* therefore, *hold fast our profession, for we have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but who was tempted in all points, without sin; let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that*

Eph. ii. 7. Gal. i. 4. 2 Cor. iv 4. John xv. 6. John xii. 25. Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16.

we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Ah! my dear brother, since we have and know the truth, let us not depart from it, but let us always firmly lay our
1 Cor. iii. 11. Psa. cxviii. 22. foundation on the corner-stone, Jesus Christ, that our building may be found well compacted when we are tried,
Matt. xxi. 42. 1 Cor. x. 4. Eph. vi. 11. Rev. iii. 11. Eph. vi. 11. Eph. ii. 19; like as gold in the furnace, viz. in all tribulation, whether with bonds or without, for Satan comes sometimes to harass one greatly. Let us, therefore, take heed that our crown be not taken away; that we be ready for combat; that we may have the helmet of salvation on
Rev. xxi. 7. our heads, with the sword of the Spirit in our hands. Dear brother, he that overcomes shall inherit all things; yea, he
James i. 12. that overcometh shall be clothed with white raiment; the
Matt. x. 28. crown of life shall be prepared for us. Fear not them, dear brother, which kill the body, but rather fear Him who,
Luke xii. 5. after he hath killed the body, is able to cast the soul into hell.

My dear brother, you know that I have written this to you from love. Accept my feeble effort in good part. I also send you a hymn. I commend you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace, and say, adieu! adieu, my dear brother, adieu. All my fellow prisoners send you their hearty greetings. Hans de Luykener sends his brother his very hearty salutation, and Anthonis Claess his cordial salutation to Elsgen Aerts. Greet heartily for us
Matt. xxv. 37. all the friends; all that fear the Lord. *Remember them*
Heb. xiii. 3. *that are in bonds, as bound with them.*

[270] My dear brother, greet also very heartily Tanneken, the wife of Lenaert the compositor, and say adieu to them for me.

Written the 25th day of October, 1559, by me, Laurens van der Leijen, in prison at Antwerp, for the testimony of Christ.[e]

[e] ["The number of Anabaptists, says Brandt, who lost their lives this year on account of their religion, amounted to about forty per-

The very severe proclamation of the Emperor Charles V., issued in the year 1550, in September; and six years afterwards renewed and confirmed against the baptists by Philip II., king of Spain (as we have particularly shewn under the year 1556), was now, in the year 1560, again renewed by the last named Philip II., and every where published in the Netherlands.[f] [Previous to his departure for Spain, Philip II. committed the government of the Netherlands to his illegitimate sister Margaret, duchess of Parma. "And since Philip had no greater concern," says Brandt, "nor any thing more at heart than the business of religion; and perplexity on that account daily increased, by reason of the dealings and commerce between the Netherlands and such of their neighbours as had separated from the church of Rome, he gave the duchess as soon as she arrived from Italy, and also to the privy council, a strict charge to put in execution all the placards or decrees made both by his father, the late emperor, and himself. One day he even went on purpose to the great council at Mechlin, and after that to the meeting of the states in Flanders, to recommend to them by word of mouth the extirpation of heresy. Letters were also despatched to all the stadtholders and governors of particular provinces, strictly charging them not to admit any excuses tending to exempt men from the rigour of the aforementioned placards; and that none should be chosen, or admitted into any place of trust, that were infected or

sons; eighteen of whom perished at Antwerp, two at Maestricht, twelve at Ghent, three at Courtray, one each at Waesten and Geerfleet, and three at Leeuwarden; and of the whole, nineteen were women." The inquisitor Ronse came to be nicknamed Saul, from his sanguinary zeal. Hist. Ref. i. p. 127. Van Braght gives brief accounts of seven persons martyred, besides those in the text.]

[f] See the forecited Defence of William I., Prince of Orange, against his Gainsayers, edition 1569, page 165, extracted from the great book of proclamations, of Ghent, &c.

branded with any hind of heresy, or suspected to be guilty of the same."] [g]

In consequence of this, the blood-shedding, strangling, and burning of the saints, was the more increased, as appears from the following martyrs.

PETER OF SPAIN, GOMER THE MASON, JACOB THE GOLDSMITH.—ANNO 1560.

Matt. xii. 50. In this year three godly brethren testified to the truth by their death at Antwerp. One Peter a Spaniard, some years before, had spoken in Spain with a brother from Amsterdam named Jacob Jans Ruytenburgh, and several times had discoursed with him of God and his word, and at last had come over with him by ship to Antwerp, leaving behind him his wife and children at St. Lucas, intending after a time to return to them, or to go and fetch them. Having arrived at Antwerp, he was at first avoided by the brethren, through ignorance, and from fear of treachery, he being a Spaniard; but after sufficient inquiry and information, he was received, not only to the assemblies,
Rom. xii. 5. but also as a brother and fellow member of the church of
Mark xvi. 16. God, and was baptized on the confession of his faith, which he made by word of mouth before the congregation, with freedom and uprightness. Shortly afterwards, intending to go back again to Spain for his wife and children, and also to gain some of his friends and acquaintance, and
John xvii. 17. bring them to a right knowledge of the truth, he was
Acts xii. 3. apprehended by the margrave, who was himself surprised to get a Spaniard into his hands. He was long kept a prisoner; and the Spaniards gave themselves much trouble about him. He clearly laid open to them the truth in their own language, both verbally and by writing; from

[g] [Brandt, Hist. of Ref. i 131.]

which they, notwithstanding, sought to make him fall away. But as he was not to be moved, and remaining steadfast, he testified to the truth and his love to God by death. Peter Gomer the mason and Jacob the goldsmith, for the name of Christ, were drowned together in a tub. Mark xiii. 13.

LENAERT PLOVIER, JANNEKEN AND MAEYKEN OF AKEN, 1560.

There was a pious man named Lenaert Plovier, about thirty-six years of age, born and residing at Menin in Flanders. He was a woollen-draper, and as he was a man of good name and reputation, he was chosen appraiser of woollen cloths.

It happened that this said Lenaert Plovier came (by the grace of God) to the knowledge of the truth, about the year 1555. Being well qualified he was re-elected to the office of appraiser, but refused to take the oath. Although he refused, his friends were satisfied, saying, "Only come and show yourself at the Town-hall;" thinking that the bailiff would not observe it, but Peter would not equivocate.

From that time he had to endure great persecution. He was obliged to live in secret; and soon after fled with his wife and children to Antwerp, about the year 1558. There they endeavoured to live by trading in silk; but as the persecution was great at Antwerp also, he purposed to remove his dwelling to Friesland, and sent [271] his wife and their four children forward. After remaining at Antwerp a full year, he thought to follow them, and having closed his affairs, travelled with his goods to the market at Ypres. On returning to Antwerp, he tarried awhile, and having heard that the

margrave was going out to seize those who would not live according to their institutions, the said Lenaert went outside the town by night, to warn some of his companions in the faith. The margrave with his host met him, spoke to him, and observing by his language that he was not a man like themselves, asked him if he had not a Testament with him. He answered, "Yes." They then apprehended him, and brought him to the prison in Antwerp.

His parents having learned this, also his wife's father, who then lived at Menin, and was a respectable man, they came with all speed to Antwerp with Lenaert's mother. The father thought, by courage, to get him out of prison, or by presents to the margrave; showing that his son-in-law was not a resident in Antwerp, but had come there to transact business. The margrave spoke them fair, saying to the mother, who had been with her son several nights in the prison, "Go home; your son shall shortly come out of prison." They therefore left the place, thinking it would be as they had been promised. The parents being gone, they examined the said Lenaert, and questioned him as to his faith, and if he had been baptized. This he freely confessed to them, and that he wished to abide by the truth he had received; not regarding his wife and their four children, whom yet he greatly valued and loved, as appears from six letters which he wrote to them from prison, of which two are here printed.

After a short imprisonment, the aforementioned pious brother Lenaert was, with two young females named Tanneken and Maeyken of Aken, condemned to be drowned. This accordingly took place. They were thrust into sacks, put into wine casks, and drowned by night in prison about fourteen days before Easter, in the year 1560 (reckoning the beginning of the year from new year's day).

Some of his companions in the faith having understood that this pious man Lenaert Plovier, with Janneken and Maeyken of Aken, would be offered up as a sacrifice in the night, came and listened at the prison-gate. Among them was one Joost Nose, and Kestine of Damme, who bore good testimony thereto, and who both died at Franeker in Friesland. Thus were these three pious witnesses of Jesus Christ tried as gold in the fire, and forasmuch as they were found upright, they will receive the crown of everlasting honour and gladness with all God's holy ones. Amen. [272]

Acts xxiii. 11.
Wisd. iii. 6.
1 Pet. iv. 5.

This was written by the son of the aforesaid Lenaert, and truly witnessed.

A Letter of Lenaert Plovier, written to his wife.

. . . . . Dearly and greatly beloved wife Maeyken, I salute you; my mind is comfortable, and I am tolerably well in bodily health, which is I hope the case with you all. But it would be highly gratifying to me to hear that your mind was set to follow the Lord in all righteousness; for we know not when the Lord will come, or when *we must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ*, where each one shall receive *according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*. Therefore, my dear Maeyken, be obedient to the gospel before the day arrives; for he will come as a thief in the night. This is the right way, that leads to everlasting life. It has sometimes been laid before you, and in no other is there salvation. For Christ saith, *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me*. Is now Christ himself the way, the truth, and the life? Let us then seek to follow the truth, and to walk in this way, that we may have this life. For it is written, that *the Lord shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*, but for vengeance

Eph. v. 25.
2 Cor. v. 10.
1 Thess. v. 2.
Acts iv. 12.
John xiv. 6.
2 Thess. i. 10.

on them that have not obeyed the gospel, *who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.* Although, my dear Maeyken, it comes to pass that
Acts viii. 1. persecution, tribulation, and anguish sometimes arise, yea,
Acts xiv. 22. bonds and imprisonment, as is daily seen with us and others who desire to obey the truth; nevertheless, let us
John xvi. 20. not neglect to walk in this path, or to follow the truth. Christ saith, *The world shall rejoice, but ye shall weep and lament; yet your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Therefore, dear Maeyken, look not at father, or mother, or children, or any thing in this world. For Christ saith, that he that
Matt. x. 37. loveth aught more than me, is not worthy of me. *He that*
Luke xiv. 26. *loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.* For to be carnally minded is death; yea, enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God. And this is to be carnally minded, to love father, mother, children, or any thing in the world more than God; or, on account thereof, to neglect following the truth; or, for temporal business, or temporal loss, or because we have many children, being anxious how we shall provide for them. Christ saith,
Matt. vi. 33. *Seek first the kingdom of heaven and his righteousness, and all needful things shall be added unto you.* Hence, be solicitous here for the best things, my dear Maeyken. This is my heart's desire for you; this I pray you.

Next, I wish you to know that I have been to Ypres market.[h] Having returned to Antwerp, our cousin Hendrik and I took a walk outside the town of Antwerp late in the evening, and coming near the town we met the

[h] [Or to the wool fair at Ypres, in West Flanders. In the 14th and 15th centuries its woollen manufactories were exceedingly prosperous. It is still a flourishing town, producing lace, linen, serge, and other woollen articles. Besides the cathedral, its chief building is the cloth hall, Les Halles, or Town-house, of a prodigious size, standing in the great market-place, in a rich Gothic style of architecture.]

officers, or constables of the city, who laid hold of us, so that we could not get out of their hands without denying our faith. Thus, dear Maeyken, although the Lord has so ordered it that I am in their hands, and that the time has arrived that the Lord will try me, be not faint-hearted, nor too much cast down. I know well that you will be dejected; but be not too sorrowful, so as to lay you up or make yourself ill. It is for the truth's sake. This oppresses me most, that I must leave you and the children; that I cannot, with you, help to provide for them, nor protect them, also that you are not like-minded with us; but I hope it will come with time. Do your best, my dear Maeyken, to be obedient to the gospel; should we see each other no more in the flesh, we may meet hereafter. I should have been pleased once more to see and speak with you, but my time will probably be short. It will also be very trying to yourself and me to separate; though it is now very painful not to be able to speak to each other. We must love God above all. Better forsake all than forsake God. However it may be, do your best to follow the truth, and to bring up the children in the fear of the Lord. I commend you to the Lord.

Luke xxii. 54. Acts xxi. 30. John xiii. 1. John xvii. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 6. Matt. xxii. 36. Eph. i. 13. Acts xx. 32.

Written at Antwerp in bonds. This took place on Sunday evening after Ypres fair. By me Lenaert P., your husband. Greet Franse, that he may pray to the Lord for me, that I may finish my course to the glory of the Lord.

Eph. vi. 18.

A Testament of Lenaert Plovier, which he left his children, when lying a prisoner at Antwerp for the word of the Lord, where he laid down his life in the beginning of the year 1560.

Dear and greatly beloved children (N. being grown up), &c.; your dear father being about to be taken from you,

1 Pet. iv. 15.

[1] [Het Offer des Heeren. fol. 174.]

not for any evil doing, but for the testimony of Jesus; and
[273] because I love you even unto death, and desire, when you
Matt. vi. 33. are come to years of understanding, that you seek your salvation as Christ has taught us: therefore I have written you this brief exhortation, that being come to years of discretion you, thinking hereon, may seek salvation.

My dear children, see that you be obedient to your mother, and that you honour her; for it is written,
Exod. xx. 12. *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land, and that it may be well with thee*; and *he*
Exod. xxi. 17. *that curseth his father or his mother, shall be put to death.* Neither be rebellious, nor gainsaying, nor quarrelsome, but
Wisd. i. 11. kind; nor given to lying, for it is written, the mouth that
Rev. xxi. 8. belieth slayeth the soul. A liar hath no part in the kingdom of God, his portion shall be in the lake that burneth with fire. You must also cheerfully apply your
Gen. iii. 19. hands, to labour and help your mother to gain a livelihood.
Eph. iv. 28. Be also willing to take a book in your hand, that, when you are come to understanding, you may seek salvation. Be always discreet in your words, as it becometh children; and when you are grown up obtain a Testament, and see
2 Tim. iii. 16. what Christ has there left and commanded us; *for all scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. For the grace of God that*
Titus ii. 11. *bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly*
Deut. viii. 3. *and righteously in this world.* Man liveth not by bread
Matt. iv. 4. only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. See, my dear children, that the word of the Lord is the food of the soul, by which the soul must live. He that does not order his life according to these words is
John iii. 3. assured of eternal condemnation, as Christ saith, *Verily,*

verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Therefore saith Christ, *Repent ye, and believe the gospel; for the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.* Therefore, dear children, take heed that you escape the punishment; for, if any obey not the gospel, they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.

Mark i. 15. Matt. iii. 10. 2 Thess. i. 8.

Oh, my dear children, see what punishment shall come upon those that obey not the gospel; to miss the presence of the Lord for ever, and to suffer everlasting punishment. Therefore, dear children, prepare yourselves while you have time, even though tribulation and suffering should arise for those who seek to be obedient to the gospel. It will not endure long, compared with what is eternal. Through much tribulation and suffering must we enter into the kingdom of God. Therefore says Peter, *Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.* Christ our teacher and master had himself to enter into the kingdom of God through tribulation and suffering; and the servant is not better than his Lord; but it is enough for the servant that he is as his Lord. Therefore he said, that he was not come to send peace on earth, but a sword; for he saw well beforehand that the world would not endure it, even as from the beginning they could not; for, from the beginning they persecuted the prophets. Although they boasted of having God for their father, nevertheless they could not endure the good words that the prophets spake to them, and whereby they warned them. They persecuted, yea, stoned and slew them. They did not even acknowledge Christ himself, although he wrought so many signs and mighty deeds

Acts xiv. 22. 1 Pet. iv. 12. Luke iv. 25. Matt. x. 24. Matt. x. 34. Matt. v. 10. Matt. xxiii. 33. Matt. xxvii. 35.

amongst them, but crucified him. O dear children, do
2 Tim. iii. 12. lay to heart what Paul says, *All that will live godly must suffer persecution.* Neglect not on this account, for the sake of a little suffering, to seek salvation; for this
Rom. viii. 18. suffering is not worthy to be compared with the glory that
2 Cor. i. 5. shall be revealed in us. *For, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*
Rev. ii. 10. It is said, *Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten days;* but be of good cheer; I will give unto you the crown of life; for,
Rev. iii. 10. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God.* Yea,
Rev. ii. 7. *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* Upon him
Rev. iii. 5. the second death shall have no power. *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*
Rev. iii. 21. Yea, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

[274] See, dear children, what glorious promises are given to
Matt. x. 28. those who overcome. Therefore fear not men, who may
Rev. xiv. 13. inflict upon us suffering here for a short time; for after this tribulation, we shall rest under the altar from all our
Rev. vi. 9. labour, with those who were also slain for the word of
Rev. vii. 9, 10, 16. God, and shall appear with many thousands of saints clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice, saying, *Salvation to him that sitteth upon the throne of our God, and unto the Lamb. They shall*

hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lord shall be their light, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God shall be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever. Rev. xxi. 23.

Therefore, my dear children, lay these things to heart. Regard these glorious promises made to conquerors, and not to apostates; for they are written in the earth. Take heed, dear children, to fear God, while the Lord grants you time; for he will come when men think not. Be vigilant, therefore, and look for him until he come. Rev. ii. 7. Jer. xvii. 13. Isa lv. 6. Matt. xxv. 13.

This is the testament that I leave you, written in prison at Antwerp, where I lie for the testimony of Jesus.

By your father, Lenaert Plovier.[k]

CLAES FELBINGER, AND HANS LEYTNER.

ANNO 1560.

In the year 1560, the brother Claes Felbinger, a locksmith, a willing servant of the word of God (he was then on trial),[l] was apprehended with another brother, called Hans Leytner, on the first day after Judica,[m] in Lent, not far from Neumarkt, in Bavaria, whither they had fled for the cause of truth. They were taken to Neumarkt, where they were twice examined by the judge and his assessors, and particularly touching infant baptism. Having, with

[k] [The martyrdom of Plovier and many others at Antwerp is celebrated in continuous stanzas in Een Liedtboecken, fol. 31. The names of not less than seventy-two persons are recorded as having suffered at Antwerp alone, from the year 1555 to 1560 inclusive.]

[l] [Felbinger was called to the ministry of the gospel in the year 1558; but had not received the imposition of hands. MS. Cronickel, fol. 86.]

[m] [Passion Sunday.]

propriety and clearness shown that Christ had not commanded it, but only the baptism of adults, who hear the word of God, understand, believe, and receive it, they were early the next day placed in a cart, and brought with horsemen and lifeguards to Landshut. They were placed in separate prisons, and Claes secured with a chain. The council afterwards assembled, and ordered them before them, and spoke much with them, but could accomplish nothing.

Matt xxviii. 19.

Acts xxiii. 23.

Acts xii. 6.

They were afterwards sent to two learned men, Dominican monks, who spoke with them concerning the sacrament, infant baptism, and why they had fallen off from the Romish church. But the brethren answered them from the word of God, and constrained them to depart.

They next tried them by torture, and racked them grievously; but with the greatest severity when they would know where they had been harboured, and where they wished to go. Claes said, "We are not obliged to tell you that." They asked, "Why?" He said, "Because you seize their goods, you torture them, and put them to death, and thereby commit sin. Ought we to betray those who do us good? We do not even betray our enemies, why then our friends?" They said, "Then we will not cease to torture you until you tell us;" and they let them remain lying a long time on the rack, until the executioner himself entreated for them, saying, "Release them, for if you torture them the whole day they will disclose nothing."

Matt. xxv. 36.

Jer. xxvi. 15.

Matt. xxii. 38.

The judge was greatly enraged, and called them villains. He said they condemned others. But the brother Claes said, "We condemn no one, but your sins condemn you, unless you renounce them; that we testify according to the truth."

The chief judge inquired, "What is truth?" The

brother said, "If I should tell you, you would not understand it. You know what the truth is as well as Pilate, who also asked the same thing." John xviii. 38.

Afterwards two doctors were sent to them, from the monks, a distance of more than nine miles, who endeavoured much, and in many ways, to draw them aside; but which they were unable to effect. The chancellor and governor of Landshut also once came and assailed them, but they found them steadfast in their belief, and were obliged to leave them immoveable, unable to gain them over by their false doctrine and deceitful counsels. Matt. xxiv. 5. 1 Tim. iv. 1.

Again, two priests and a teacher learned in the scriptures came, and disputed warmly with them on infant baptism; but Claes opposed them powerfully with the scriptures, and drove them from him.

After this, the chancellor with some black friars came, and sought to move them by kindness; but they valiantly opposed all the gates of hell, being quite assured that they had the truth of God, which they faithfully and solidly defended. They said that they would, in the simplicity of Christ, abide therein. On this, the chancellor said to the brother Claes, "Are you simple? that I cannot believe; a hundred may come forward, before one that will be able to defend himself like you. I take you to be a vagabond, like many that are now found running about without any principles." But the brethren boldly confessed and defended their faith, and God gave them such a mouth and wisdom, that the other party could not resist. Matt. xvi. 18. [275] Luke xxi. 15.]

After all, the progeny of Pilate condemned them to death. The brother Claes had his tongue bound fast, that he might not speak to the people at the place of execution; but at the last his tongue was released sufficiently to enable the two brethren to speak to each other. Matt. xii. 50.

Hans Leytner, who was first led out by the execu-

tioner, said to Claes, "My dear brother, if you should be terrified by my death, come yourself first, and I will stay to the last." But the brother Claes said, "O no, no; it will not move me." Hans therefore valiantly extended his neck, and was beheaded. This Claes saw, unaffrighted,
Acts xii. 60. and with good courage, as if unconcerned. He then went forward, knelt down, and surrendered his neck to the stroke, and was beheaded for his faith. Thus did both these testify to the truth of God with their blood. It took place the tenth day of the month of July, 1560.[n]

JORIS AND JOACHIM.—1560.

It is recorded that, in the year 1560, there were brought
Acts xi. 26. before the tribunal at Antwerp two godly Christians, named
Psa. xliv. 22. Joris and Joachim. When standing before the justices, like
Rom. viii. 36. sheep prepared for the slaughter, Joris was asked by the sheriff if he had been re-baptized? He answered: "I have been baptized according to the doctrine of Christ, as he
Matt. xxviii. 19. commanded his apostles, saying, *Go and teach all nations;*
Mark xvi. 16. *he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* Hence they must first be taught and believe, and then be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The sheriff asked Joachim also if he had been baptized.
Eph. iv. 5. He answered: "I believe in one baptism, one faith, one Lord, and one God."

The justices then condemned them by virtue of the

[n] [Felbinger wrote two letters from his prison at Landshut to Leonard Sailler and to the church. The first is probably the work referred to by Fischer under the title, Die erste Rechenschafft Claus Felbingers, gethan zu Landshut in Baiern, anno 1560. MS. Cronckel, fol. 87, 88. Fischer's Taubenkobel, am ende. Winter's Gesch. der baier. Wiedert., p. 117.]

king's proclamation. Joachim, hearing his sentence, said: "We thank you, gentlemen, for the pains you have taken with us, but may God forgive you the blindness of your hearts, and enlighten you." Luke xxiii. 23.

Departing from the tribunal, they said: "We are not ashamed of the gospel." Rom. i. 16. On going through the street they sang:—

> "O Lord, my thoughts delight in thee;
> For thee my spirit longs." Psa. cxliii. 8.

Joachim said: "Fear not them that kill the body; hereafter, when they mourn, we shall rejoice." Matt. x. 28. Luke vi. 22.

Like giants in the faith they pressed through the strait gate to the new Jerusalem, and reaching the place where their burnt-offering was to be presented, they gave to each other the kiss of peace. At the stake Joachim said: "O Father! forgive them who inflict this suffering on us; but we thank thee that thou hast counted us worthy to suffer for thy name; therefore, O Lord, stand by us; draw near unto us with thy help in this last extremity." Matt. vii. 14. Rev. xxi. 2. Phil. ii. 17. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Luke xxiii. 34. Acts v. 41.

Joris said: "O Lord! thou knowest that I have sought thyself and my salvation; for this I must now die; in thy mercy receive me, O Lord." He said further: "Ye citizens of Antwerp, fear not; though we die for the truth, Christ our Lord is gone before us, and we must follow him." 1 Pet. ii. 21. They then lifted up their voices and sang a parting hymn.°

Then, commending their spirits into God's hand, they ended their lives in the flames; they now lie under the Luke xxiii. 46.

° [As follows:—

"Oorlof aen Broeders en Susters geemen
Wy moeten nu scheyden,
Tot dat wy comen by Christum allcen
Ons Hooftman en anders geen,
Wilt u daer toe bereen
Daer wil ick u verbeyden."

From Een Liedtboecken, &c., fol. 28, where this narrative appears in a versified form.]

Rev. vi. 9. Rev. xix. 8. Matt. xiii. 43. Matt. xxvi. 29. Rev. ii. 17.

altar waiting to be clothed with white linen, and to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, where new wine and heavenly manna shall be given to them.

WILLIAM, THE TAILOR.—1560.

Matt. xii. 50. John xvii. 17. Acts xii. 3.

At Antwerp, in the year 1560, a brother, named William the tailor, was apprehended on account of the truth, and condemned to death.

When brought before the tribunal the sheriff asked him if he had been re-baptized? He said: "Why do you ask me concerning my baptism, and not about my life and faith, then you might pass a just judgment upon me, and this people might become followers thereof?" The sheriff again inquired if he had not been re-baptized? William said, "You indeed desire but a single word; I have, before this, made a confession; judge righteously, and give the business due consideration." The sheriff asked once more if he had been baptized? William said: "You have asked me only that before; may I ask a question of you?" The sheriff said: "First give me an answer, then I will tell

Mal. iv. 1.

you." William said: "I wish that you thought for once on that day that shall burn as an oven, when the ungodly shall be as stubble." He further said: "In Mark xvi. it

Mark xvi. 16.

is written, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*" The sheriff said: "You are not questioned about that."

Acts ii. 41.

William said: "Children cannot believe, and therefore I have been baptized on my faith." The gentlemen then

Acts ii. 38.

retired, and William said to the people: "Repent and be converted." The sheriff forbade him to speak, but he

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replied: "Let me speak; it may not be for long." The gentlemen returned immediately, and William said: "Gentlemen, if you wish not to perish, judge not according to the king's proclamation; think on that day which none can

escape, in which you will lament it, except you repent." He was sentenced to death, and his sentence was read to him; though it was early in the morning, he was brought forth into the market-place and strangled at a stake and burned. Thus did he press through the conflict like a valiant champion of Christ. 2 Cor. x. 3.

HANS MANDEMAKER, JURIAEN RAEK, AND EUSTACHIUS KUTER.—ANNO 1560.[p]

In this year 1560, the brother Hans Mandemaker, a minister of the word of God and of his church (who had many times been sent out to the work of the Lord), was apprehended for the word and faith of God, on the first Friday after St. Martin's, near Rosenheim in Bavaria, together with Juriaen Raek, a deacon,[q] and also a brother named Eustachius Kuter. They were taken to Innsbruck,[r] and there delivered over into the hands of the magistrates. Hans Mandemaker, being a minister, was sent to the Fellenburg, where he was confined in a deep tower, in which were many worms and other creatures. The bats flew about him; the mice ran away with his food; and among them he incurred much danger; enough to frighten any one who was without a firm confidence in God. Matt. xxiii. 8. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Acts viii. 13. Acts xii. 3. Acts vi. 3, 5.

When the examiners wished to speak with him, he was called upon by name to prepare himself quickly, and be

[p] [In the MS. Cronickel, fol. 88, the names of these three martyrs are given as follows:—Hans Mandel, George Rack, and Eustachius Rotter. Hans Mandel was apprehended in 1544, at Landeck, in the Upper Innthal for the gospel, but escaped. In 1551 he was chosen a minister, and in 1553 was fully set apart by the laying on of hands, fol. 67, 75, 79. In the index to the manuscript, Rotter is spelt Kotter.]

[q] [Raek was chosen to the office of deacon in 1559, at the same time with Hans Brael. MS. Cronickel, fol. 86. See ante, pp. 95, 104.]

[r] [The capital of the Tyrol.]

ready to suffer. The other two brethren were incarcerated in the round tower in Innsbruck; all three lay in prison until the end of the year. On the second of January following, the magistrates dealt rigorously with Hans Mandel; also with Eustachius, and Juriaen Raek, each separately. They replied faithfully to many articles, which were committed to writing, as was also their confession respecting them. It was then sent to Vienna and other places, as being something new.

After this, they were again conducted to the same towers and prisons, where they lay until the Friday after St. Veyt's, the thirteenth day of June, when they were condemned to death. At the passing of the sentence, there was a great number of persons present. They freely addressed the judges of the court and the jury, proving to them that the sentence which in the presence of God they passed upon them, would rise up in judgment against them to their condemnation, for having condemned the innocent blood. When they replied that they were obliged to judge according to the emperor's command and proclamation, Hans Mandemaker said, "O ye blind judges! you are to judge according to your own heart and conscience, as you will have to answer for it in the presence of God. If then you judge and pass sentence, according to the emperor's proclamation, how will you answer before God?" Eustachius also said, "What does the emperor's mandate concern us, that you read that to us? Read our confession, in which we have testified from the divine and holy writings of the bible, the genuine truth of God, for which we have to suffer." Thus they spake with boldness, and exhorted the people to repentance. When the brethren Juriaen Raek and Eustachius were led out of the hall, Juriaen began to exhort the people to repent, to forsake their sins, and tread in the path of truth; it was the truth, for which he should this day suffer.

Jer. xxvi. 15.
Wisd. v. 3.
Wisd. vi. 4.
Rom. xiv. 12.
2 Tim. iii. 16.
John xvii. 17.
Rom. ii. 38.
Mark i. 15.
Eph. i. 13.

Hans Mandemaker was also brought out; so that they met together at the place of execution with great joy, praising God. A brother, Lenaert Dax, went and gave to them his hand, and they took leave of each other. By this they were greatly cheered, praising God that they had seen a pious person, who would relate their end to their brethren and the church. The minister, Hans Mandel, began to speak to the people, and to admonish them, that they should turn from their sins, and follow the truth of God, that they might not be condemned, but be saved in Christ Jesus. With the greatest boldness he lifted up his voice, and said, "What I have taught and professed is divine truth; and I will attest it with my blood." He ceased not to proclaim repentance. The judge once said, "Stop a little, Hans." He was therefore silent a little while; but immediately afterwards spoke again, till he was almost hoarse with speaking. Nearly till death they continued to exhort the people to repentance. They were not hindered, but permitted to speak with sufficient liberty. They were also allowed to speak to each other. They made hearty prayer to God, praising and glorifying him for having thus far preserved them pious and steadfast. They prayed him further, in his faithfulness, to keep them even unto death, which was now near at hand; and that, as body and soul were now to be separated, he would receive their spirits into his hands.

Matt. xii. 50.

Isa. i. 16.

John xvii. 17.

1 Cor. xv 57.

Luke xxiii. 6.

Their sentence was then read, in which among others these articles were especially mentioned. First, That they did not believe that the holy body of Jesus Christ was in the sacrament; but they keep the Lord's supper in the same manner as Christ kept it with his disciples. Secondly, That they do not approve of infant baptism; but of the baptism of adults, as Christ commanded them. Thirdly, That they approve of the state of marriage,

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Matt. xxviii. 19.

which they have acknowledged and not opposed. Other articles were read to them; as also what they held and had confessed respecting the Romish church; all which was stated as contemptuously as was possible by the judge.

After this they were led to the place of execution, called the Swine Acre, near the sheepfolds. There Eustachius, who was weak and sick in body, was first be-
Acts xii. 2. headed. After him, the brother Juriaen Raek stepped cheerfully forward to the executioner, and called out with
Matt. xix. 29. a cheerful heart, and said, "Here I leave wife and child, house and goods, body and life, for the sake of the faith and truth of God;" upon which he knelt down, and the executioner beheaded him.

Hans Mandemaker was reserved to the last. When he
Rev. ii. 3. saw the other two lying beheaded, he said, "My brethren, you have overcome, and shall inherit all things." The executioner then took and bound him to the ladder, kindled the fire, and threw him into it alive. The two headless bodies he placed upon a pile of wood, and burned them to dust and ashes.

Thus they voluntarily and patiently bore testimony to
John xv. 27. Acts xxiii. 11. 1 Cor. iv. 7. their faith in Christ, by their words, their life, and death. Yea, with their bodies and their blood. They showed that God gave them this strength as a special favour; journeying with steadfast confidence from this world to their eternal native land.[s]

[s] [Mandemaker was the author of a treatise entitled Rechenschafft, printed in 1561, in Innsbruck. Fischer's Taubenkobel, p. 9, and at the end.]

SOETGEN VAN DEN HOUTE, AND MARTHA.

ANNO 1560.

At this time a godly woman, named Soetgen van den Houte, also fell into the hands of the persecutors of the truth. After fierce assaults and imprisonment, she witnessed the truth that endureth for ever with her death and blood, in the city of Ghent, on the 27th of November, 1560; and with her another female named Martha. Soetgen van den Houte, also testified that her husband had previously trodden the wine-press of suffering, had piously witnessed the truth, and for it laid down his life, as may be plainly seen from the following testament:—

A Testament of Soetgen van den Houte, which she left for a memorial to her children, David, Betgen, and Tanneken, as the best estate; and which she confirmed by her death at Ghent in Flanders.

In the name of the Lord. 1 Tim. i. 2.

Grace, peace and mercy, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, be to you, my dear children. A loving salutation to you, David, Betgen, and Tanneken, written by your mother in bonds, to put you in mind of the truth, 2 Tim. i. 8. to which I hope to testify by word and by death, by the help of the Almighty, and as an example to you. May the wisdom of the Holy Spirit instruct and strengthen you, that you may be nurtured in the ways of the Lord. Amen.

Further, my dear children, since it is pleasing to the Lord to take me out of this world, I will leave you a memento, not of silver or gold, for such jewels are perishable. I would fain inscribe a jewel in your heart, were it possible—the word of truth. Thus I will a little teach you John xvii. 17.

by the word of the Lord, with my best wishes, according to the small ability I have received of the Lord, and in my simplicity.

First, I admonish you, my best beloved, to suffer yourselves to be always instructed by those that fear the Lord. Then you will please God, and he will be a father to you, and not leave you orphans, as long as you are obedient to good counsel and instruction, and fear the Lord. For David says, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.* And further he says, *The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul from death. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him: fear him ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.*

Eph. vi. 4.
John xiv. 18.
Psa. xxv. 12.
Psa. xxxiii. 18.
Psa. xxxiv. 7, 9.
Prov. i. 7.

[278] My dear children, let no impure thoughts rest in your hearts; but exercise yourselves with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Wicked thoughts will then find no place. Let no filthy babbling proceed out of your mouth. Of all such things men will have to give account.

Eph. v. 19.
Eph. v. 4.
Matt. xii. 36.

Further, my beloved, wherever you are, be the least, and be not wise in your own conceits. Suffer yourselves always to be instructed by those that are above you. Be silent whenever others speak. Humble yourselves before all; for *he that exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* Christ who is the greatest of all, made himself the least, as our example. It is written, the greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shalt find favour before the Lord; for the majesty of the Lord is reverenced of the lowly.

Matt. xxiii. 12.
Psa. viii. 5.
Syr. iii. 18.

My children, be upright in all your dealings, for in the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death. The righteous rejoice to do what is just, but they are a terror to evil doers. Prefer to gain a liveli-

hood by the labour of your hands, to eat your bread with peace. Desire not a trade or concern of great profits. *A little with the fear of God, is better than great treasure and trouble therewith: better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.* Prov. xv. 16. Prov. xvii. 1.

My children, love not dainty food, nor wine. He that desires costly meals will not become rich; but be content with the labour of your hands.

Overreach no one; but be content with what is reasonable, as I have shown you an example. Be burdensome to no one, as long as you can procure what is needful. *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* And Paul says, *Having food and raiment, be therewith content.* Acts xx. 35.

Thus, my dear children, follow the example set before you; always walk in the ways of the Lord, with sobriety and thankfulness, as you have heard me read in Daniel of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who were chosen by the king of Babylon, to be fed with the same wine and food that the king ate at his table, that they might look fair, in order to serve the king; but they desired nothing but pulse and water. They would observe with sobriety and thankfulness in the fear of God their fathers' law and commands, and they were fairer and fatter than they who ate the king's dainties. Thus they faithfully walked in the ways of the Lord. By prayer and supplication [279] they were well-pleasing to God. Therefore God did great things by them; and delivered them out of the lions' den, and out of the fiery furnace. Joseph, when he was sold into Egypt, desired no dainty food, nor wine, because the Egyptian women sought to seduce him. But he feared God, and he preserved him. He pleased God by sobriety and prayer, and was made the ruler of Egypt. Dan. i. 5. Dan. iii. Gen. xxxvii. 28. Gen. xxxix. 7. Gen. xli. 40.

My dear children, take this as an example from your youth up; you will then please God, and he will preserve you from all temptation. O my lambs, you are yet in

your youth, in your childhood; you have still your portion in your father's kingdom. Be solicitous to keep it safe; that you do not like Esau, who gave away his portion or inheritance for a mess of pottage, not esteeming his father's blessing. He gave it for perishable food; but Jacob chose the best portion; he was obedient to God and his father, and walked in the ways of the Lord with all uprightness.

Gen. xxv. 33.

My best beloved, seek after instruction, that you may learn to know which is the right way. You have now to choose, life or death, good or evil. That in which you have pleasure will be given you. If you desire evil, if you choose the gratifications of the world (from which all unrighteousness proceeds), viz. lying and deception, playing, gaming, swearing, cursing, backbiting, hatred, envy, drunkenness, banqueting, luxury, idolatry, covetousness, uncleanness, vanity, filthy conversation, dancing, and so forth; although this is esteemed by the world to be no sin, but pleasure, it is nevertheless an abomination in the eyes of the Lord.

Matt. vii. 14.

Syr. xv. 17.

Gal. v. 19.

1 Pet. iv. 3.

Therefore, my dear children, consider, if you take pleasure in these things you thereby sell your birthright, your Father's inheritance, for a mess of pottage, viz. for a little temporal pleasure, and these will lead you to destruction. See, if the great multitude do not choose to take this road; therefore Esdras well and rightly said: That men find much more earth of which to make earthen vessels, than gold of which to make golden vessels; and like as the great waters of the sea are more than the drops, so will they be the greater number that will be condemned. Many are called, but few are chosen; for they regard not their calling. Christ saith, *My sheep hear my voice and follow me,* but these follow the great multitude of the ungodly and of the false prophets.

1 John iii. 10.

2 Esdras viii. 2.

2 Esdras ix. 16.

2 Esdras viii. 3.

John x. 27.

Choose rather to suffer affliction with the children of

Heb. xi. 25.

God, that with them you may obtain a reward. To them all the glorious promises belong, but they must suffer much; for *the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* Matt. xi. 12. Luke xxiv. 26. It is also written, *Through much tribulation you must enter the kingdom of heaven.* David says, *We are counted as sheep for the slaughter;* Psa. xliv. 22. and Paul says, *We which live are alway delivered unto death.* 2 Cor. iv. 11. It is also written, *Ye shall weep, but the world shall rejoice; ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Ye shall have a little tribulation; but be of good cheer, and be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life. Rev. ii. 10. *In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,* John xvi. 33. and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Isa. xxv. 8. Further it stands written, *The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready; and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; the fine linen is the righteousness of saints; blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb; then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* Rev. xix. 7. Matt. xiii 43.

Who would not love such a Lord and Father, who hath chosen us, even as he chose Israel of old, and hath given us his commandments and laws, namely, his gospel, which teaches us to do his will and pleasure, and hath made us heirs of all the riches of heaven. Isa. xlix. 8

Oh! my dear children, I have written this with tears, admonishing you from love, praying for you with a fervent heart, that, if it were possible, you may be found among that number. When your father was taken from me I did [280] not spare myself, day or night, to bring you up; and my prayer and care continually was for your salvation; and being now in bonds it has always been my greatest concern that I could not, according to my anxious desire, better provide for you. When I was told that you were conveyed to Oudenarde, and from thence to Bruges, it was

Matt. x. 37. a sore stroke to me. I have never had greater sorrow. But when I thought that neither my sorrow nor my solicitude could help you, and that we must be separated from all that is dear in this world for the sake of Christ, I left it all to the will of the Lord, still hoping and praying that he in his Gen. xxxix. 21. compassion would preserve you, as he kept Joseph, Moses, Exod. xiv. 29. and Daniel among the ungodly. This will also be your Dan. vi. 22. happiness if you diligently frame yourselves to the truth; the angel of the Lord will be with you as he was with Tob. vii. 12. Tobias, conducting him until he brought him to his father's Tob. xi. 13. house, where he rejoiced with his father and friends, thanking God for his greatg oodness.

If you follow good instruction it will lead you through all perils, and bring you to your Father's house, where Isa. lxiv. 4. such joy is prepared as ear hath never heard, nor eye seen, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what 1 Cor. ii. 9. joy is prepared for the chosen; but to the elect God hath revealed it by his Holy Spirit.

To this may you be brought by the word of the Father, through the mercy of the Son, and may the wisdom of the Holy Spirit strengthen you that you may lay hold thereof. Amen.

David, my dear child, I commend you to the Lord; you are the eldest: learn wisdom, that you may set a good example to your sisters. Beware of bad company, and of playing in the streets with bad boys. Learn diligently to read and write, that you may become wise. Love one another without strife or wrangling. Be affectionate the one to the other. The wisest must bear with the dull and admonish them with kindness. The strong must have compassion on the weak, and assist him all in his power from love. The rich must assist the poor from brotherly love. The youngest must obey the eldest in what is good. Exhort each other to be diligent in labour, that you may be loved. Provoke one another to good works, to modesty,

chastity, and quietness. Be ever careful the one for the other, for the time is come that love will wax cold, yea that the very elect, were it possible, should be deceived. Diligently search the scriptures, that you be not deceived. Cleave at all times to the first and second commandment, that will teach you aright. Believe it not readily when evil is spoken of another, but examine. Make no commotion about it when you are belied, but suffer it for Christ's sake. Love your enemies, and pray for them that speak evil of you, and make you suffer. Rather suffer wrong than do wrong. Endure rather grief than put another to grief. Be yourselves reproached rather than reproach another. Be rather belied than belie another. Let what is yours be taken from you rather than take what is another's. Be rather stricken than strike another; and so forth.

Matt. xxiv. 12, 24.

John v 39.

Prov. xxv. 21.

Observe, my dearest, all this is wrought by brotherly love, and is all comprehended in the second commandment. You must always mind not to seek your own profit alone; but be always concerned for those with whom you have dealings, whether young or old.

Further, my dear children, Betgen and Tanneken, my dear lambs, I admonish you in all these things, to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord. Obey your uncle and aunt, and likewise your elders, and all who instruct you in virtue. To them whose bread you eat you must be submissive, in whatever is not contrary to God. Be diligent, always encouraging yourselves to do your work, so will you be loved wherever you dwell. Be not contentious, nor talkative, nor light-minded, nor saucy, nor surly in speaking, but friendly, modest, and still, as it becomes young females. Pray to the Lord for wisdom, which shall be given you. Learn to read and write well, take pleasure therein, so will you become wise. Take pleasure, and exercise yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Pursue the only true joy. Learn to

Judith viii. please the Lord from your youth, as the holy virgins and
2 Esther ii. 15. women did, like Judith. Esther was a young woman who feared God, was adorned with humility, agreeable, virtuous, kind, and lowly in heart; therefore she pleased the king Ahasuerus above all other virgins. But in her elevation she was not proud. Although shining in royal garments, she humbled herself with fasting and prayer to the Lord for her brethren, that they might be delivered out of their enemies' hands, not esteeming herself higher than one of the least of her brethren.

Mind, my dearest, when you come to understanding, that you take heed to adorn yourselves with good works,
Gal. v. 22. viz. with the works of the Spirit, that is, in all good-
[281] ness, kindness, meekness, humility, gentleness, obedience, patience, righteousness, modesty, chastity, purity, peaceableness, steadfastness, compassion, wisdom. Be diligent
Deut. vi. 5. in good works, in faith, hope, and love. Love God above
Matt. xxii. 38. all that is in the world, and do to your neighbour as you wish to be done to you, the whole law and the prophets hanging thereon.

Behold, my dear children, this is the ornament of the saints.

O my best beloved, labour for such a wedding garment, that you may go in, with the number of God's children, to
Rev. xix. 7. the marriage of the Lamb, where they shall shine like the
Matt. xiii. 43. sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Thither may the mighty hand of the Lord bring you; may he lead you, as he led Israel out of Egypt, and bring
Exod. xiii. 21. you to the new Jerusalem, that we may see each other in the resurrection day with joy.

I commend you to the Lord, to the God of Abraham,
Acts xx. 32. the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; may he preserve
Exod. xxx. you to the end of life. Amen.

My dear children, I leave this as a memorial or testament. If you turn it to profit, you will thereby collect greater treasure than if I had left you great riches, which

are perishable, for the wealth of this world may be lost by fire, war, or bad fortune.

Therefore he is not wise who sets his heart upon aught that is perishable. We are not certain of one hour's time. We must leave all behind. Therefore, be not sorrowful, although what we had is scattered or lost. The prophet says, we must be the prey of all. You must therefore thank the Lord that he preserved it to us until I had brought you up thus far. If you walk in all righteousness the Lord will afford you a sufficiency. Take an example in Tobias. And David says, that the righteous shall not suffer want, nor his seed beg their bread. Isa. lix. 15. Tob. iv. 18. Psa. xxxvii. 25.

On which account, be not desirous of another's property or jewels. Grudge not that another has more than you. Respect no person for his gifts, but follow the little flock who walk in the truth and in love; for love is the bond of perfectness, and the commandment of love exceeds all commandments. Mind therefore that you always follow those who walk most in love; for the tree is known by its fruits, although these are hidden from all men; but so was Christ in like manner; and the servant may not be above his lord. Luke xii. 32. Col. iii. 14. Matt. vii. 20. Matt. x. 24.

I will now say adieu. Adieu my dear children. Adieu all my dear friends together.

My best beloved, although our adversaries tell you that your father and I differ in faith, do not believe it. For he held the truth respecting baptism and the incarnation of Christ, in every point he could comprehend, and was a pious witness of righteousness, and laid down his life for its sake as an example to you, treading the same path as the prophets, the apostles, and Christ himself. He contended before us with much tribulation and suffering, and left his children behind him for the sake of Christ. Therefore, be ye followers of him, for there is no other way.[t]

[t] From what is here related, it appears that the husband of this Soetgen van den Houte, died also as a pious witness of Jesus; al-

Apply yourselves diligently to read this testament. Amen.

Another letter of Soetgen van den Houte, to her brother and sister as also to her children.

Written from love.

John x. 27. The peace of God be with you, my dear brother and sister. I have received two letters, with their inclosures. I thank you very heartily for all the kindness you have ever shown me, and still will show, as I hope, to my three lambs that I leave behind me. I commend them to the Lord, and to them whom he may dispose towards them by his grace.

I once more take leave of you; I think it is now for Rom. xii. 1. the last time. We are so strengthened in mind to present our offering, that I cannot express it. I could leap for joy Phil. ii. 17. when I think on that eternal good which it is promised us Matt. x. 22. to possess, to all that persevere in that which the Lord hath commanded.

I know not with what praise to glorify the Lord, that He hath chosen Martha and me to such honour; us, who 1 Cor. iv. 13. are such poor contemptible creatures. For we were esteemed in the world only as an offscouring. Yet God Acts xxii. 15. has chosen such despised, miserable, worthless worms of the earth, that he will work by us, that we should be his witnesses, we who are not in ourselves worthy to receive the smallest gift that the Lord can bestow.

Oh! who can comprehend the power of God, that he should be most graciously compassionate to those who, here, are the most despised, when they call upon him in confidence; and firmly fix their hope in his grace unto the

though we have not been able to learn either the time, place, or manner of his death.

end? It were impossible for such to be rejected of the Lord. Therefore I pray all that love the Lord to humble their hearts; for the Lord, by the prophet Isaiah, says, "With him will I dwell that is of a contrite and humble spirit, and that trembleth at my word." Oh! those that [282] thus humble themselves before the Lord, and suffer not themselves to think that they are anything before God and men; them will God exalt and enrich with heavenly possessions. Think how Christ chose humility, when he left his Father's glory and descended here into the lowest parts of the earth in obedience to his Father. From his great love he became man. In great humility he came to serve us. He suffered pain and reproach, bearing all with patience and longsuffering, in obedience to his Father, even unto death, until he had finished all, that he might make us blessed. Oh! what love hath he displayed in his groans and anguish, when as man, he said, *How am I straitened till all be accomplished.*

Isa. lvii. 15.

Matt. xxiii. 11.

Phil. ii. 8.

Luke xii. 50.

Ah! my best beloved, consider our forerunner, Jesus Christ, how he regarded the humility of Mary, so as to be born of her. Although she was chosen to such honour, yet she humbled and debased herself, saying, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for, behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. His mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation. He scattereth the proud. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. To the poor the gospel is preached. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* My dearly beloved, my heart's desire and prayer, for the last time, is that you give diligence to walk in love and simplicity with one accord, always in the fear of God, that

Luke i. 44.

Luke i. 38, 48.

Exod. xx. 6.

Isa. lxi. 1.

Matt. v. 6.

you may be filled with heavenly blessings, and be satisfied therewith from this time and for ever. Amen.

Acts xx. 32. I commend you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace. May that same God comfort, strengthen, and establish you all by his Spirit, that you may perfect that to which you are called, to the honour and praise of the Luke xxii. 30. Lord, that you may rejoice together, and sit at the Lord's table, where he shall serve us with the new wine in the kingdom of God his Father.

This was written when we had taken, as we thought, our last supper. Adieu, my brethren and sisters all. Martha, my sister in the Lord, and I greet you heartily in the peace of the Lord, for the last time, and all to whom we are known wherever they are. We are joyful Heb. xii. 22. in the Lord. We say adieu, till we meet together above, in the new Jerusalem. Read these parting lines to all who wish to hear them before you send them away; and then send them to my sister Betgen.

Further, my dear child, Betgen, I rejoice greatly that the Lord has spared me long enough to be gladdened, before my death, by your letter, by which you have Eph. iii. 16. strengthened me. I pray the Lord that he will strengthen Isa. lxi. 1. and establish you by his Spirit, that you may go forward and pursue the best things, of which you have written me.

Oh, my dear lambs, mind that you spend not your youthful days in vanity or pride; nor in tippling or feasting; Rom. xiii. 13. but in sobriety and humility, in the fear of God, diligent in all good works, that you may be clothed with the adorning of the saints; that God may make you meet, by Rev. xix. 7. his grace, to enter into the marriage of the Lamb, and that Matt. v. 12. we may see you there with joy. Your father and I have Acts iv. 3. shown you the way, with many others besides. Take the Matt. xxvii. example of the prophets and apostles. Even Christ

himself went this way; and where the Head has gone before, there must the members follow.

I commend you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace. With this I take my leave of you for the last time, my dear lambs. Be ever mindful of each other in love. Learn diligently to read and write, and submit yourselves to every one in what is good. When your brother David and Tanneken come to you, salute each other with an affectionate kiss of peace, in my name. Acts xx. 32. Rom. xvi. 15.

Adieu, my dear child, Betgen. Adieu my dear little ones, David and Tanneken. Adieu, my dear brethren and sisters all, and my friends every where.

Once more, we say adieu. Salute heartily for me your dear uncle and aunt, with a kiss of peace in my name.

Written by me, Soetgen van den Houte, your mother, in bonds. Written hastily (trembling with cold), with love to you all. Amen.[u]

JOOST JOOSTEN,

BURNED AT VEERE, IN ZEALAND, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1560.

It happened in the year 1560, that there was apprehended at Veere, in Zealand,[v] a young brother, named Joost Joosten, born at Goes, a small town in Zealand. He was tolerably well acquainted with the Latin language. When a student, about fourteen years of age, it happened that King Philip was in Zealand, and that Joost Joosten sang [283] a chorale in the church to the organ, as is usual in the popish church. The king was so pleased with the

[u] [Ottius says these letters existed in his time in German. Annal. Anab. p. 136.]

[v] [Or Tervere, a fortified town at the mouth of the East Scheldt.]

youth's singing, that he wished to take him with him to Spain. In consequence of this, he hid himself full six weeks, not wishing to leave his country. He was afterwards converted to the truth, and baptized on a profession of his faith, leading accordingly a Christian life. This the enemies of the faith could not endure, and apprehended him when he was eighteen years of age. He had to endure many assaults, and was repeatedly tempted to apostatize. He disputed with four inquisitors on many articles of faith. They used great efforts to draw him over to their religion. When they could not move him by such means, they most cruelly tortured him, especially with an instrument called iron teerlings, which they forced into his knees, until they came out again at his ankles. But all this he steadfastly bore with great patience, and preserved the treasure which he had in his earthen vessel. He was therefore condemned by the progeny of Herod to be burned, which they executed upon him on the Monday before Christmas day. On going to death, he rejoiced greatly in the Lord, and, when he went into the small house of straw, in which he was burned, sang the last verse of the hymn made by him, viz:—

Mark xvi. 16.
Matt. xxviii. 19.
Matt. xxvi. 2.
Macc. vii. 13.
Matt. x. 22. 2 Cor. iv. 7.
Acts xii. 2.
1 Pet. iv. 1.

"O Lord, thou art ever in my mind."

He likewise wrote a confession of faith on five sheets of paper, but which through length of time is lost.[w]

[w] [Van Braght also gives a brief record of six other persons, three men and three women, who were drowned this year in a wash-tub for their faith, p. 270. Brandt says, "About eighteen or twenty Anabaptists were executed this year on account of religion, seven of whom were women. Some were privately murdered in prison for fear of tumults." Hist. of Ref. in Netherlands, i. 136.]

JOOS VERBEEK.—1561.

On the 7th June, 1591, the margrave of Antwerp went out, with a great number of people, well armed with staves, and apprehended Joos Verbeek, a minister of God's word and of his church. On the 9th he was heard. He very freely confessed his faith, and also his office, which the margrave and the gentlemen ridiculed. He was likewise very severely tortured; but through all God preserved his lips from giving information of any one, although he was so unmercifully handled, that a cord bound round his body, broke in pieces. Twice in four days he had to endure the rack. He was once scourged till the blood flowed. He patiently endured it all; but greatly lamented that they had broken or so lamed his right hand by the torture that he was disabled from writing.

1 Tim. iii. 2. Matt. x. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 15. [284] Matt. vii. 11.

On the twentieth day of the month, he was brought before the tribunal. The sheriff asked him if he had been re-baptized? He answered, "Ask me concerning my faith, which I have confessed in prison, before the gentlemen and the margrave." The sheriff then asked him what he held concerning infant baptism? He said, "I have confessed that it is not of God, but a human institution." The sheriff asked again, if he had been re-baptized, and said, "Say yes, or no; for I know you will not lie, therefore tell me the truth." He said, "I have been baptized on a profession of my faith as Christ teaches, Matt. xxviii. Mark xvi."

Having confessed his faith, baptism, and doctrine, and not being permitted to say more, sentence was pronounced upon him. In the meantime, he spake to the people, "Dear fellow citizens; I have lived here eleven years, and no one can bring any complaint against me, for I have

done wrong to no one, and my life and doctrine agree with the word of God." "That is true," exclaimed a brother; which the constables hearing, they rose up, and inquired who it was; but they did not find him.

Matt. xxiii. 8.

Joos said, "Oh! that I might defend myself publicly against the priests who were with me in prison, as Paul was permitted to do before Agrippa! but we are forbidden to speak."

Acts xxvi. 3.

Coming from the tribunal he said, "He, who delivered Daniel from the lions' den, will likewise preserve me; for I suffer not for evil doing, but for the name of the Lord."

Dan. vi. 23.

Mark xiii. 13.

"That is true," cried a brother. Others called out, "Be valiant, dear brother." Joos said, boldly and cheerfully, "Dear fellow citizens, thus must all God's children suffer; the saints of God, the prophets, and many godly men have trodden this path before me."

Eph. vi. 12.

Matt. xxiii. 34.

When he approached the straw hut, and stood before the door,[x] in which he was to present his burnt-offering, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "O holy Father, support thy servant in this time of need." The executioner's man wished to put a cord with a knot into his mouth, to prevent his speaking; but nevertheless he was not silent, for he was heard to exclaim, "O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me."

Luke xviii. 38.

The executioner performed his work with fear and trembling. When the fire was kindled he exclaimed, "O heavenly Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. O Lord of hosts, who separated me from my mother's womb, be with thy servant in this last distress which I suffer for thy name." He once more exclaimed, "O heavenly Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;"

Luke xxiii. 45.

Jer. i. 5.

Matt. xxv. 15.

[x] [Many of the martyrs were burnt in a small hut made of the faggots and straw used to consume them, and not at a stake.]

and presented a peaceful burnt sacrifice, a mirror and example to us all.[y] Rom. xii. 1.

A short Letter of Joos Verbeek, written to his wife in prison, at Antwerp.

That grace and mercy from God our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ may be with you all the days of your life in the true fervour of the Holy Ghost, my dear wife and sister in the Lord, is my affectionate greeting. Amen. Rom. i. 7.

I salute you most heartily, and all my five dear children. Bring them up in the admonition of the Lord. Be in behaviour as it becometh holy women. Teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to be chaste, modest, obedient to their husbands, and steadfastly continue to keep the rule according to which you now walk. The Lord qualify you for all good works in what may become your calling. I commend you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace. May he grant us to see each other in eternity. Eph. vi. 4. Titus ii. 3. Acts xx. 32.

By me Joos Verbeek, your husband and brother in the Lord, written at Antwerp, in prison, where I lie a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus Christ, with my left hand, with great difficulty, my right hand having been lamed by torture. Rev. vi. 9.

Greet for me all the friends, especially the office bearers of the church.

[y] A versified narrative of this martyrdom is found in Een Liedtboecken, &c., fol. 18. Among others encouraging him at his death, was a sister, who forced her way through the crowd.]

JULIUS KLAMPHERER. 1561.

In the year 1561, the brother Julius Klampherer, was led prisoner, for his faith and the truth of God, from Italy to Venice. There they many times formed their designs respecting him, heard him, examined him, and dealt with him to make him recant, but he always defended himself with ability. It was permitted him to commit to writing the subject in discussion between himself and the popish commissaries, that he might make his defence, and give a reason of his faith in his own hand-writing. This he did, [285] and remaining steadfast, they at last condemned him to be thrown into the sea. He answered, "That was not unexpected by me, for I knew at my conversion that I must expect to die as a witness of the truth; but I think it strange that the gentlemen of Venice should yield and consent to it, and neither think nor consider that they must give account before God at the last day for shedding innocent blood."

Mark i. 15. Acts xii. 3, 4. Matt. x. 22. Luke xxi. 16. Jer. xxvi. 15. Rom. xiv. 12.

To this they replied, that they did not ask him about that; and as his discourse did not please them they did not allow him to speak further, but had him hastily led back to prison.

They were now wishful to execute the sentence they had pronounced upon him, and resolved to proceed to its execution. According to their custom, he having been a priest, they first degraded him from his priesthood; then, in the evening, in the twilight, they led him out as if they would take him before the bench, and unexpectedly threw him into the sea and drowned him. He had looked for nothing else; he was therefore cheerful, constantly singing and praising God with a joyful and courageous mind, until he had obtained the crown of pious martyrs and faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ. But although they drowned

2 Tim. ii. 5.

him privately by night, it will yet be revealed at the great day of the Lord, and be awfully avenged.[z] Matt. vii. 2.

LAURENS VAN DE WALLE, ANTONIS SCHOONVELT, KALLEKEN STRINGS, SIJNTGEN POTVLIETS, AND MAEYKEN KOCX.—ANNO 1561.

In the year 1561 some brethren and sisters came, after having suffered much persecution, to reside near Ypres, in Flanders, at a place called Hoogensieken; they had left money, goods, friends and relations, to follow Christ, and to live there in quietness, and to gain a living by weaving tape. They were, however, spied out while sitting and working together. The inquisitor came to apprehend them, accompanied by many people, well provided with staves, swords, and cords, just at the time that Antonis, who had come to pay them a visit, had taken leave and was standing at the door to depart. Matt. x. 23. Matt. xix. 29.

As they came making a great noise, Sijntgen Potvliets, who was pregnant, ran out of the house, and was immediately seized. Karel N. also ran out of doors, and Master Klaes, who was a great persecutor and an assistant of the inquisitor, ran after him, slashing him with a drawn sword; but though he was wounded he nevertheless escaped. Maeyken Kocx, who was also pregnant, was seized by the inquisitor; he had a drawn sword in his hand, and as she cried out aloud to spare her child, he in his thirst for blood, like a madman, wounded himself.

Laurens van de Walle, Anthonis Schoonvelt, and Kalleken Strings, were apprehended, but Hendrik N. escaped.

[z] [There would appear to have been many baptists in Italy at this time. One named brother Francisco, who had been chosen as a minister, died this year at Proczka in Hungary. MS. Cronickel, fol. 89.]

While they were being bound they comforted each other with God's word; and when brought out of the house they spoke cheerfully to the neighbours, saying: "Can any one complain of us that we should thus suffer? it is for the name of Christ, and of this we ought not to be ashamed."

2 Cor. xiii. 11.
Matt. x. 21.
1 Pet. iv. 16.

As they drew near the town, Kalleken began to sing a hymn. Master Klaes said: "The apostles did not sing as you do, and I will not dance; why then do you sing?" Antonis said: "Sister, do not fear, but sing joyfully;" and Laurens helped, singing with her. When they came into the town there was a great concourse of people; they proclaimed God's word both by singing and speaking. "Amongst all the things," said Laurens, "for which we are apprehended, there is no evil doing; we are arrested for living agreeably to the word of God."

Matt. x. 28.
1 Pet. iv. 15.

Kalleken Strings said: "The gate is strait, and the way is narrow that leads to life; enter therein; do good and forsake evil, and fear not the rulers of this world; but buy Testaments, read the will of God, and follow it." They were led to the tower of the hall and placed in confinement, where they remained some months and days, patient and cheerful, expecting the day on which they should present their sacrifice. In the meantime they were visited and comforted by many brethren and sisters; they were also examined, from time to time, respecting their faith, which they boldly confessed, and from which, for no pain or suffering, would they swerve.

Matt. vii. 14.
Phil. ii. 17.
Acts xvii. 40.
1 Pet. iii. 15.
Heb. x. 38.

Finally, after having suffered many tortures, on the rack and by other means, Laurens van de Walle, Antonis Schoonvelt, and Kalleken Strings, for their valiant and persevering adhesion to the truth, were delivered over, by the inquisitor, into the hands of the secular authority, to be dealt with according to the tenor of the royal proclamations. In doing so, the inquisitor read, in the hearing of

Mark xiii. 13.

the ignorant people, great and heavy accusations against them (as he thought); as, that they affirmed and confessed the pope of Rome to be antichrist; that they held the church of Rome to be the whore of Babylon; that they denounced the mass as an idol, &c. 1 John ii. 18. Rev. xvii. 5. [286]

Laurens began to say, that he had not (without some qualifications) thus spoken or confessed; but in violent language he was told to be silent. He said, however, "Thieves and murderers are permitted to have some one to speak for them, but you have not allowed either attorney or advocate to speak for us; therefore, we are obliged to speak for ourselves."

Kalleken Strings sat quietly with her head on her hand, martyred with pain; she also spoke boldly.

On the evidence of the inquisitor, both Laurens and Antonis Schoonvelt were condemned by the magistrates to be publicly strangled at a stake and burned. A scaffold and two stakes were therefore prepared, as also wood and straw.

They were brought out with their arms bound together. Coming to the place where their sacrifice should be made, they fell upon their knees, and offered prayer to God. When they rose up, the executioner entreated their forgiveness, which they kindly granted, according to the precept of Christ. Acts vi. 60. Matt. vi. 14.

Laurens said to the magistrates aloud, that he truly and cheerfully forgave them, and all that were guilty in the affair. He fearlessly said, like the third son of the Maccabees, "These limbs were given me by the God of heaven, I will, therefore, willingly surrender them again, for the sake of his law." On entering the straw house, they both took leave aloud of all the brethren and sisters scattered in many countries, towns, and villages; and commending their spirits into the hands of God, they departed from this world. 2 Macc. vii. 11. 1 Pet. i. 1. Luke xxiii. 46.

In the month of October of the same year, Kalleken Strings, a very comely and well-behaved young woman, was also handed over to the secular authorities. She was modest, fearless, and steadfast. By no fair promises of possessions and money, or temporal prosperity, nor by any pain or torture (although she was so tortured, that she was taken from the rack for dead), were they able to seduce her from the faith. Even when her mother had, for this purpose, come to her in prison, she was unmoved and could not be brought over; but, hearing and seeing her daughter's steadfastness, and kind reception, she said, "My daughter is better than I."

Matt. x. 22.

2 Macc. vii. 24.

After this, she was sentenced to be strangled and burned. She said, "You have now condemned me to the flames, according to the emperor's proclamation; do you dread the judgment of God, by which he will sentence you to everlasting fire."

Matt. xxv. 32.

On the day of her expected execution, a great number of people, from far and near, assembled together to witness it. The magistrates seeing this, and fearful of uproar, did not bring Kalleken out. The executioner came alone out of the town-hall, saying to the people she was already dead. The people therefore dispersed, thinking that she had privately been beheaded.

But, early the next day, unexpectedly, not a scaffold, but other preparations having been made, she was brought to the market place, and after prayer to God, commending her spirit into his hands, the sentence was executed. Thus she departed from this world, going with her lamp burning to meet her Bridegroom.

Eph. vi. 18.

Luke xxiii. 46.

Matt. xxv. 10.

Meanwhile, Sijntgen Potvliets, not having remained steadfast, was set at liberty. But Maeyken Kocx remaining firm, was respited, and kept in custody, until she was delivered, and had recovered from her confinement. Then notwithstanding that her heart clung to her husband

and children, yet, loving God above all, and from love to him abiding in the truth she had known and received, esteeming that precious treasure of greater value than her own life, she was condemned to be publicly strangled at a stake and burned; which was executed. Commending her spirit into the hands of God, she cheerfully departed, knowing that she should inherit everlasting joy, and enter in with the five wise virgins, when, at midnight, the cry shall be heard, saying, *Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.*[a]

Matt. xxii. 36.
2 Cor. iv. 16.
Luke xiv. 26.
Luke xxiii. 46.

FRANCOIS, OF ELSTLAND.[b]—ANNO 1561.

A brother, named Francois of Elstland, otherwise called Francis of Menin (a mason by trade), left Menin for Arras, in Flanders, to work as a mason, and thus to earn a livelihood. At this place, on St. Denys' day, the 9th October, 1561, as he was taking a horse to water, belonging to a gentleman for whom he worked, he was apprehended, in consequence of his showing but little reverence to the popish idol. Notwithstanding many solicitations, threatenings, and sufferings, he would not renounce his faith, and was, at last, on the 21st October, burned alive, as a witness for God. A shameless monk exclaimed; "Go, thou accursed one, from these flames into everlasting fire!" But Francois patiently bore it, leaving vengeance to God, who in his own time will pass a truly righteous judgment.

[287] Acts xviii. 3.
Acts xii. 3.
Heb. x. 38.
John xv. 27.
1 Pet. ii. 23.
Ps. vii. 11.

[a] [These martyrs are commemorated in a hymn in the Liedtboecken, fol. 41, 47.]

[b] [Alsace, now a department of France.]

JAN SCHUT.—ANNO 1561.

For following Christ, and for living agreeably to God's holy word, another pious champion and combatant of Jesus Christ, named Jan Schut, fell into the hands of the tyrants and persecutors in the year 1561, in the city of Vreden in Westphalia. In this place he suffered, and, by God's grace, bore a cruel imprisonment, often threatened with death. Being brought bound before the justices, to
Matt. x. 32. give account of his faith, he made a fearless confession,
Luke xii. 8. affirming that he believed according to the word of God.

1. They asked him about his baptism, and what he held on infant baptism? He answered, that he had been baptized upon his faith, as Christ his faithful Saviour in
Mark xvi. 16. Mark xvi. has commanded us; that baptism should be
Matt. xxviii. 16. administered only to believers, and not to children without understanding; that he had never read in the holy scriptures of infant baptism, and therefore it could not be proved from the word of God. Baptism belongs to
Acts ii. 41, and viii. 36. those alone who have amended their sinful lives. They asked him, peremptorily, if he would not recant? He
Matt. x. 33. replied that, it would not answer to forsake God's word
Mark viii. 33. and suffer eternal death; but that he would rather suffer for the truth, were the pain twice as great.

2. Concerning the supper of the Lord, he solidly
Matt. xxvi. 26. avowed that it should be kept according to the institution
Mark xiv. 22. of Christ; and that therein, with a humble heart, His bitter sufferings and innocent death are to be remembered,
1 Cor. xi. 23. and how he shed his precious blood for us poor sinners on the cross.

3. They asked him, in many words, if Christ our Saviour was not of Mary's flesh and blood? As this point is a principal article of our Christian faith, he answered them fully, saying, that he had never read

their opinion in the word of God: and asking them how could he be from the earth, whom God the Father had sent down from heaven? But he was conceived of the Virgin Mary, of the Holy Ghost, and became man by the active power of the Almighty; so that the holy thing that was born of her, was called the Son of the most high God, without in the least degree partaking of the corrupted or sinful flesh of men. The Word, according to the testimony of John, became flesh, or man. The glory of the only begotten Son of the Father was handled and seen, and the promises of God, that he should spring from the stock of David, were perfectly fulfilled in Christ, by whom we all, that were lost, are redeemed and reconciled unto God.

John xvi. 28. John xiii. 3. Gal. iv. 4. Luke i. 27. Isa. i. 7, 15. Matt. i. 20. John i. 14. 1 John i. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Isa. xi. 1. Rom. i. 3.

4. They asked him concerning their rulers, if they were not of God? He answered, Yes; for the protection of the pious, and the punishment of evil-doers. They are ordained of God, to govern their countries in peace.

Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13.

5. They asked him what he held regarding the marriage state. He answered, that one man and one woman were bound together in matrimony; and that this bond no one had power to dissolve, except for the cause of adultery; herein following the doctrine of Christ, Matt. xix.

Matt. xix. 16. Gen. ii. 24.

6. They inquired of him concerning revolt and mutiny. He answered that he did not approve of such evil things; but that he, with his brethren, were taught, on the contrary, to love their enemies, and to do good to them that despitefully use and persecute us; and that nothing different from this could be said with truth of him and his brethren.

Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii 14.

7. They asked him who was his leader. He answered that it was Christ and his doctrine, who had called him in peace; and by his faithful Saviour and his blessed teaching he hoped to abide, and to confirm the same by his blood and death.

Eph. i. 22, and v. 23. 1 Cor. xi. 3.

He was then sentenced by these tyrants, and executed with the sword. The principal justice, who pronounced this sentence, riding past the body a few days after the murder, called out in ridicule, "Schut, sing us a hymn;" Schut having been cheerful in his affliction, and having sung much in prison and on his way to death. The judge was seized with apoplexy and never spoke again, but died shortly after. It was regarded by many as a visitation and punishment from God.

[288] Concerning this account, read his own hymn, in the old hymn-book, beginning,

"O Lord, I may well complain." [c]

JAN, HENDRIK, BASTIAN, HANS, MARIKEN OF MENIN, BEETKEN OF BRUGES, AND LYNTGEN.—THE 15TH AUGUST, ANNO 1561.

In the year of our Lord 1561, there were apprehended at Antwerp in Brabant, for the testimony of Jesus, seven pious witnesses of the truth, named Jan, Hendrik, Bastian, Hans, Mariken of Menin, Beetken of Bruges, and Lyntgen. All these built the edifice of their faith so firmly and strong on the chief corner-stone, Christ Jesus, that neither by the philosophy and artifices of the papists, nor by tyranny and violence, could they be brought to recant. Their faith was found far more precious than perishable gold, that is tried by fire. At the place mentioned, on the 15th of August of the same year, they resigned their lives for the truth, and through God's grace obtained the end of their faith, which is eternal salvation; expecting to receive in eternity the crown of everlasting glory with all the pious.

Matt. vii. 24.
Eph. i. 21.
1 Pet. ii. 6.
Col. ii. 8.
1 Pet. i. 7
1 Pet. i. 9.

[c] [Een Liedtboecken, &c., fol. 51. The first line is, "O Heer God ick mach wel clagen."]

Concerning this, read the long and beautiful hymn, composed for the comfort of these prisoners, in the second hymn-book, beginning—

"Dear brethren, we salute you with songs."

TWELVE CHRISTIANS AT BRUGES: — ADRIAN BRAEL, LUCAS HENDRIKS, MARIJN AMARE, NIKASEN AMARE, HANSKEN LIS, ANDRIES MILLER, ANTHONY KEUTE, HANSKEN PARMENTIER, JAN N., JELIS OUTERMAN, FRANCIJNTGEN MILLER, AND MAEYKEN TRAMS, 1561.

It happened in the year 1561, in the evening before St. Martin's day, that at Bruges in Flanders, some Christians were assembled, to instruct each other from the word of the Lord, and to exhort one another to amendment of life. When the magistrates heard of it, they sent the bailiff's officers thither, who, on arriving, sprang in and cried out, "Deliver yourselves up, prisoners, or we will run you through; give up your arms and books." They replied, "We are not people that desire to avenge ourselves, but leave vengeance to God, who in his own time will take vengeance." They were then bound together, two and two, and led to prison. They went fearlessly, comforting each other with the word of God. Three escaped, viz., Rutsaert, with his wife, and one named Maeyken; but the rest arriving at the prison, were cheerful. Francijntgen Miller said to Maeyken: "Dear sister, let us remember that the kingdom of heaven is nigh at hand; and be true and faithful to our bridegroom."

Acts xx. 7. Mark i. 15. Rom. xii. 19. Heb. x. 30. John xviii. 12. 2 Cor. xiii. 13. Acts v. 42. Phil. iv. 4. Mark xii. 30. Matt. xxv. 1.

Jelis and Hansken Parmentier sang each a hymn for joy. On St. Martin's day they were brought before the magistrates, where they boldly confessed their faith. They

Mark xvi. 16. also confessed that, according to the command of Christ, they had been baptized.

These ten brethren and two sisters then lay in prison
Acts xvi. 25. about thirty days, where they praised God and prepared
Acts v. 41. themselves to suffer for his name. In the meantime they were once more brought before the magistrates, where they again made confession of their faith, and said they would adhere firmly to it.

Rom. xii. 1. Afterwards, on the 10th of December, six of them were sacrificed, viz.:—Adrian Brael, Lucas Hendriks, Marijn Amare, Nikasen Amare, Hansken Lis, and Andries
2 Cor. xiii. 11. Miller. With a cheerful heart they comforted each other.
2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Amongst other expressions they said, "The battle is now fought; the course nearly finished, and henceforth (as
James i. 12. Paul says) the crown of life is laid up for us."

The next day, on the 11th December, six more were put to death, viz.:—Anthony Keute, Hansken Parmentier, Jan, Jelis Outerman, Francijntgen Miller, and Maeyken
Matt. xxv. 1, and xxii. 12. Trams. With their lamps burning, and adorned with their wedding garments, they went joyfully to meet their Bridegroom; and with love so great that, for his sake, they regarded not the bitterness of death. Francijntgen
Matt. xii. 50. called out to one of her acquaintance, charging her to salute heartily the brethren and sisters in the Lord; and
Matt. x 22. to say that they cheerfully suffered for the name of the Lord, and would valiantly endure the conflict as their Bridegroom had done.

Thus were all these, as well the first as the last six,
John xvii. 17. strangled and burned together for the name of God and his truth. They are now at rest, waiting for the coming of the Lord who will avenge their wrong.

JAN HULLE, AT YPRES.—1561.

Even as the wolf will generally obey the instincts of his inherent voracious nature, so that the sheep can make no sure agreement with him, but must stand constantly in peril and danger of being devoured by him, so was it in the year 1561, in Flanders, in the town of Ypres, where a pious sheep of Christ was seized and taken prisoner by devouring wolves. He was an old man, by name Jan Hulle. He sustained and endured many hard combats with these wolves, not on account of any evil deed, but only for living agreeably to God's word; from which they tyrannically sought to draw him aside and make him fall. But having, as an obedient follower of Jesus Christ, listened to the voice of his only shepherd, he fled from these strangers, and would not hear them. He was, therefore, condemned by the great ones of this world to suffer death, and at the place mentioned was committed to the flames. The suffering inflicted on him he, like a pious warrior of Jesus Christ, armed with patience, steadfastly endured through faith; and as he was not ashamed of Jesus Christ and his truth, but openly confessed it before rulers and princes, testifying to it, and confirming it by his blood; so shall Christ (coming in the clouds of heaven in the glory of his Father), in return, not be ashamed of him, but acknowledge and confess him before his Father, placing him at his right hand, and calling him, with all the blessed, to enter that kingdom which was prepared for them from the beginning of the world, that is, everlasting glory in heaven.[d]

Matt. vii. 15. John x. 3. [289] 2 Tim. ii. 5. 1 Pet. iv. 15. Eph. v. 1. John x. 27. 1 Pet. iv. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3. 1 John iv. 5. Matt. x. 32. Luke xii. 8. Matt. xxv. 31. Rev. iii. 5. Matt. xxv. 34.

[d] ["There suffered this year, says Brandt, "upon account of religion, seven and twenty anabaptists, among whom seven were women. They were all beheaded at several places; to wit, one at Arras, one at Wynox-bergen, five at Ypres, twelve at Bruges, and eight at Antwerp." Hist. of Ref. i. 141. Van Braght mentions four other persons besides those in the text.]

JELIS STRINGS, WITH PIETER AND JELIS POTVLIET.—1562.

[289] Jelis Strings, a circumspect young man, a journeyman, and Pieter Potvliet, with his brother Jelis Potvliet, a young person, all three born at Tielt, in Flanders, having
Eph. v. 25. attained the knowledge of divine truth, and joined the
Matt. x. 23. church of God, after enduring much persecution, came at length to reside at Werwyk, gaining a livelihood by weaving tape. It fell out about the middle of the summer, in the year 1562, that the inquisitor came by night with many officers, and surrounded the house, and took these three brethren prisoners.

When it was day they were put into a waggon, and bound fast with cords; the inquisitor, with his companions, riding at their side on horseback. They were thus conducted through Menin to Courtrai, a journey of three hours, where they lay prisoners three months, very strictly guarded. They had many discussions with the inquisitor, and other so called spiritual persons, concerning
Matt. x. 22. the faith; but they valiantly and perseveringly adhered to the truth they had received. The inquisitor, therefore, with the lord of Everbeck (in whose lordship they had been apprehended), and many attendants, on horseback
John xviii. 31. and on foot, took these pious witnesses of the truth in a waggon the same way back, and brought them to Werwyk, where, in the market called the Steenacker, a piece of ground, enclosed with stakes and wood, was prepared to burn them. But as it had rained exceedingly hard
[290] while they were on the road between Menin and Werwyk, and the wood and straw had become very wet, and also because the bailiff was not willing to have them burned,
Acts xii. 2. they were all three condemned to be beheaded.

Jelis Strings was first brought forth. On going to

death he said, among other things, "Because I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, born of the Virgin Mary, I must therefore die." A monk who was in attendance on him immediately said, "You lie." Jelis said further, completing his speech, "And because I believe the pope to be antichrist." Finally, kneeling down, he said with a trembling voice, "O heavenly Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The executioner very soon completed his work and covered his dead body with wood, that the others who were to follow might not see it.

Matt. xvi. 6. Luke ii. 7. Luke i. 43. 2 Thess. ii. 3. Acts vii. 60.

Pieter Potvliet was next brought forward. As he was going to death, he said, "It was appointed before for the name of the Lord." He cited also in confirmation of his faith, Eph. iv. 5, "That there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism," &c. Having knelt down, he likewise exclaimed, "O heavenly Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The executioner speedily used his sword, and inflicted five strokes on the shoulder, head, and neck before he completed his work, when he covered the dead body as before.

Luke xxiii. 33. Acts vii. 60. Luke xxiii. 46.

Jelis Potvliet (still young in years) was the third brought forward. Among other expressions when going to death, he repeated the saying of Christ, *Fear not them that kill the body*, &c. Kneeling down he also said, "O heavenly Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But before the last word was perfectly uttered, his head was severed from the body. Their bodies were placed upon wheels, between Werwyk and Menin, but shortly afterwards were taken off and buried by some of their companions.

Tob. i. 19.

Two letters were written by Jelis Strings, and are preserved, which he wrote at Courtrai, in prison, and one of which, for the satisfaction of the Christian reader, we have appended hereto.

The first Letter of Jelis Strings.

2 Tim. i. 2. Grace, mercy, and peace, be to you from God our heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of
2 John i. 3. the Father in truth and love. May he lead you who have now for a short time to suffer persecution, strengthen and
Matt. xiv. 23 confirm you, and grant you to be strong in the inward
2 Cor. iv. 16. man; that Jesus Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you may be rooted and grounded in love; and comprehend with all saints, the height, the depth, the length, and breadth of his mercy; and rightly walk therein, and remain unmoveable to the end of your life. This we desire for all of you who love the Lord, as a hearty salutation, my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord.

Further, you will (after salutations) be pleased to know that it is tolerably well with us; the Lord for ever be praised for his mercy. Pray the Lord for us, that he will order all things agreeably to his will. We are tolerably courageous, the Lord be praised.

Further, I cordially entreat you to make a wise distinction in all things, and frequently instruct the simple and weak in the faith. There is great need of this. They trouble those that are prisoners when they find that they are not well informed, as much again as those that are established in the faith. You that are weak and simple, take it well to heart, and be not ashamed to inquire concerning the things of your soul, until you can clearly distinguish before the pinch comes. Take this warning to heart, for one is confident when assured and certain of his
Ecclus. xxii. 16. faith. For Sirach says, "A man who is assured of his cause, is like a house that is bound and nailed firmly together, and is not alarmed when a storm arises." Thus, dear friends, let us also build upon Christ Jesus who must be the foundation, that is to say, on his word, for Christ
Matt. vii. 24. Luke vi. 48. himself saith, *Whosoever heareth my word, and doeth it, I*

will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man who built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock. Matt. vii. 24. Luke vi. 48. Although floods and storms assail it, it remains firmly standing; for it is founded on the rock. But he that hears my word, and does it not (saith Christ), he is like a foolish man, who builds his house on the sands. When the floods come, or the winds blow, it falls, and its fall is great. Observe, my friends, he saith it is great. Thus, dear friends, dig deep, that is, according to my understanding, examine, and take it well to heart, that we be not found foolish. James likewise exhorts us, that we be doers of the word, and not hearers only, thereby deceiving ourselves. For a man that hears it and does it not, is like a man that sees his natural face in a glass, and going away, forgets what manner of man he was. But he that beholdeth himself in the law of God, and is a doer of the word, and not a hearer only, he is blessed. Yea, Christ saith himself, *Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.* John likewise admonishes us, [291] Rev. i. 3, that they are blessed who hear the words of the prophets and keep the things which are written therein. James i. 22. Luke xi. 28.

Dear friends, if we hear his word, and keep it in our hearts, all the promises of salvation belong to us. It is the true food of the soul, with which all Christians must be fed, in order to live; for Christ saith, *that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Even as the prophet Jeremiah says, *O Lord, thy word did nourish me when I had found it, and the same was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.* Solomon says, *Every word of God is pure, and a shield unto them that put their trust therein.* Let us then, dear friends, ever confide in God's word, it will not deceive us, for John says, *These are the true sayings of God. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God shall not pass away.* Matt. iv. 4. Jer. xv. 16. Prov. xxx. 5. Rev. xix. 9. Matt. xx 35.

Let us attend well thereto, for it is that which shall judge
John xii. 48. us at the last day; for Christ saith, *I judge you not; the words that I have spoken shall judge you in the last day.* O dear friends, shall that judge us? then must we examine well, and always try ourselves, if our lives accord with God's word, and rightly view ourselves therein, to see if there is nothing about us condemnable; and if we find aught impure in us, let us follow the prophet's counsel,
Isa. i. 16. who says, *Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; judge the fatherless; plead for the widow; come now, and let us speak of chastisement; though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow.* He saith, *If ye will hear me, ye shall possess the good of the land; but if ye refuse and remain disobedient, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* Dear
1 Cor. x. 10. brethren and sisters, let us not be disobedient, neither murmur against God like Israel, for which they were cast
Heb. iii. 7. out. Do we to-day hear his voice? let us not then harden
Heb. iv. 2. our hearts, but let us fear, lest, a promise being left of entering into rest, we should come short of it; and that none of us be found remaining without, for we are sufficiently admonished and invited, as Israel was, but the word preached did not profit them, because they did not
Num. xiii. 30. firmly believe it. Let us have a steadfast faith, like Caleb
Deut. i. 20. and Joshua, who regarded neither the size of the Canaanites nor the strength of their cities, although their cities reached up unto heaven; that is, their walls were high. The men were like unto giants; they were as grass-
Num. xiv. 9. hoppers in their sight. But Caleb and Joshua confided in God, and said, God is with us, their defence is departed from them, we will devour them like bread; and by their faith they overcame, and entered the land of promise. So, dear brethren, our enemies are great, strong, and many;

but, if we have faith, as Caleb and Joshua had, if we look not to our own strength, but go out of ourselves, and with our whole hearts rely upon him, we shall then surely overcome. David says, *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* Solomon likewise says, *Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thy own understanding; acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he shall direct thy paths.* Paul also says, *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.* David says, *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul; and leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Although I should walk in a dark valley, I fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.*

Psa. xxxvii. 5. Prov. iii. 5. Heb. xiii. 5. Deut. xxxi. 6. Psa xxiii. 1.

O dear friends, where is there such a god to be found among the Babylonians? He saith, When thou walkest through the fire, I will be with thee, that the flames kindle not upon thee; when thou passest through the water, I will be with thee, that the streams do not drown thee. Yea he saith, *The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed from thee, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* Brethren and sisters, have we such a God, who thus helpeth in trouble? who are we, that we should be afraid of men, and of the sons of men which shall be made like grass? Christ himself hath said, *Fear not them which kill the body, but fear him who is able to cast both soul and body into hell.* See, friends, although many sufferings come upon us for Christ's sake, yet much comfort comes to us also by Christ. Let us therefore heartily humble ourselves

Isa. xliii. 2. Isa. liv. 10. Isa. li. 12. Matt. x. 28. 2 Cor. i. 5. 1 Pet. v. 6. 1 John v. 3.

and keep his commandments, and pray before him with tears, that he, according to his pleasure, will show us his mercy, that, like as we now must sorrow on account of
1 Pet. i. 6. their haughtiness, we may, after this mourning, rejoice,
Deut. xxxii. 16. because we follow not the sins of our fathers, who forsook their God, and followed after strange gods; for which the Lord gave them into the hands of their enemies. Therefore, dear brethren, ye who are elders, comfort the people with your words; exhort them to remember that our fathers were tried in many ways, and had to overcome many assaults, that they might be put to the trial, whether they from their hearts served God. Thus Isaac, Jacob, and Moses stood steadfast, and overcame much trouble. But others, who would not submit to affliction, but impatiently murmured against God, were destroyed of the destroyer and the serpents. Let us think that we are chastened of God for correction and not for destruction,
Heb. xii. 6. and that the chastisement is much less than our sins; *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye not children, but bastards.* Therefore, dear friends, let us for a little time be patient
Rom. viii. 18. in this tribulation, for the suffering of this present time is not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed
1 Pet. v. 10. in us. The God of all grace strengthen, establish, settle us all; this I wish you altogether as a salutation. I, Peter, also greet you heartily, and desire from my heart that you would watch over my wife. She told me she hopes to do
Eph. vi. 19. all in her power. We entreat you to pray for us, that we may finish our course to the honour of God and the salvation of our souls. We send to you a warning that if Paurvels has not removed house, that he remove. We advise you for the best. We would add other intelligence, but we are fearful lest the letter should not reach you. I,

Pieter Potvliet, greet you heartily, and leave you my testament. Continue steadfast and unmoveable in the work of the Lord; see that your labour be not in vain, and remain commended to God.

By me Jelis Strings.[e]

HENDRIK EEMKENS.—1562.

At Utrecht, in the year 1562, was apprehended, for the [294] testimony of our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, a brother John xv. 21. named Hendrik Eemkens, a tailor, to whom, after every solicitation, and torture, tidings were at length brought that he must die. He was glad that it was permitted him also to be a witness of the name of the Lord. This intel- Acts v. 41. ligence was brought him by the pastor of the Buarkerk, Rev. ii. 13. and a grey monk, whose name was Brother Jan van Herentals, who delivered the message in few words, and again left him. He said to brother Jan, "You need not come again to-morrow; for I have no need of you." The next morning he was brought out of prison into another room, where he had much conversation with the monk who immediately condemned him. To which he replied, saying, "Judge not, that you be not judged." The monk said, "You have acknowledged that you do not believe Matt. vii. 2. that Christ took flesh of Mary." To which he answered, "I have once spoken in my confession. Shall I repeat it again to you?" and referred him to John i. The monk then asked if he would not confess to him. He said, "I have confessed myself to God." The monk said, "Have you grown so old without confession?" "No." said he, "I have confessed myself to men, and God knows

[e] [Van Braght also gives the second letter containing some account of the martyr's examinations on baptism, the incarnation, and kindred topics.]

I am heartily sorry for having submitted so long to such confession." The monk then asked if he would not hear mass. "I have," said he, "read so much, that I loathe the mass. And though I would not have it, if you, notwithstanding, will do it, how can I help it? Hence, if you will do it, do it; but not on my account, for I do not wish it." Whereupon the monk asked if he would not partake of the sacrament? He said, "No; but could I receive the
Matt. xxvi. 26. supper of the Lord as he instituted and commanded it, and the apostles and their churches practised it, that I should
Acts ii. 42. heartily desire, and thank the Lord for it; but your deception I do not desire." The monk then doomed him to perdition two or three times. Afterwards came the constables, and wished to give him drink, but he did not desire it. One of the jailer's daughters then came, a light minded young woman, and wanted to pour it into his mouth with a spoon—she was sitting and drinking there with the constables. But Hendrik said to her, "I have already told you that I do not desire it; if it is possible, leave me in peace." On which one of the constables said, "Will you then go hence fasting?" He replied, "I thirst for pure wine, of which I hope soon to drink." The monk said, "God does not pour new wine into old bottles." He
Matt. xxvi. 29. said to the monk, "Because I am made anew, therefore you hate me." Many other words passed, that are forgotten, for he himself could not write; and this was written by one that was present while Hendrik was speaking with the monk. Though he was not a brother, nor a fellow member of the church with Hendrik, yet, attachment urged him to write out this, which he remembered, as he saw and heard it, as a memorial for the use of all lovers of the truth. What follows, not he only, but also the citizens in common, saw and heard, and can attest it with him.

When Hendrik came upon the scaffold, he began to

speak, at considerable length, to the citizens, saying among other things, "Good citizens, amend your lives, and receive the gospel only, and no human institutions." Mark i. 15.

As they were leading him to the justices to hear his sentence, he again turned his head to the townspeople, and said, that they were all institutions of men, with which people were now occupied, and they who would not follow them, must be the scorn and offscouring of all things, and be thus led to death. Matt. xv. 6. [295] 1 Cor. iv. 13.

The sentence having been read, many went away, who lamented it and could not witness his death. But Hendrik Eemkens fell upon his knees, and on his face, on the scaffold, to pour out his earnest prayer to God. When the executioner saw that he fell prostrate, he tore his cassock, which was hanging on his shoulders, from his body, and pulled him up by his shirt, so that he could not complete his prayer.

He then said to the people, "Dear citizens, repent, it is more than time. Live according to the command of God, and agreeably to the words of the holy gospel." He again called out with a loud voice, "This is the narrow path, and the strait gate;" and named the chapters in which it stood, and many other scriptures to the same purpose. He afterwards went, of himself, with a cheerful mind, to the bench where he was to be strangled and burnt, and said again, "This is the strait gate, press through it; the men of God have pressed through it; for he that firmly combats to the end shall be saved; of that I do not doubt." He now stretched out his body and neck on the stake with great fearlessness, and said again, with cheerfulness, "Dear citizens, repent; believe the gospel, and not men; for this is the narrow way that a Christian must walk in." The executioner then took a chain and put it round his body; and a small bag of gunpowder, and put it round his neck, so that it hung at his breast. He spoke Acts ii. 38. Matt. vii. 14. Luke xiii. 24. Mark i 15.

valiantly to the end, but the words were not very intelligible; for the executioner took a cord, and put it about his neck and wound it round. He then closed his eyes, just as if he was swooning; and was seen to do no more than once again to raise his eyes heavenward, and immediately became unconscious. The executioner proceeded to draw the bench from under his feet; then took a pitch fork on which he put a bunch of straw, and lighting it at a pot of fire that stood on the scaffold, as it began to burn, he applied it to the powder, the flame of which flew into Hendrik's eyes, but did not burn his hair. He raised his hands once more towards heaven, and after that, was no longer seen to live.

Rom. xii. 1. Thus did Hendrik Eemkens present his offering, as a pious witness of the Lord, on the 10th June, 1562, between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning.

JURIAEN FRIESEN, A CABINET MAKER, AND WILLEM VAN KEPPEL.—ANNO 1562.

Acts xii. 3. This Juriaen Friesen, and Willem van Keppel, who had before been a popish priest, were both seized at Cologne, for the truth of the gospel. It is recorded that in the year 1562, Willem being sought for and found, he went freely [296] with those who took him, and was first put into a tower in the town. He did not long remain there, but was brought into the count's prison prepared for those that were sentenced to death. Coming thither, he found there the Matt. xii. 50. above mentioned Juriaen, his brother in the Lord, likewise lying a prisoner, whose company was a great comfort to him.

Many nets and snares were laid for them to catch their souls, and particularly the cry was all about infant

baptism, which they declared to be right. But as they had not one word of God to prove it, they employed human authorities; but, to God be the glory, they could not move them. Sometimes the justices implored them, and sometimes they threatened them severely with tortures and death; but in these the prisoners rejoiced. Others spoke kindly, and then harshly; but the prisoners were unmoved; for, by the help of the Lord, their hearts were as firm as a wall.

The earl offered Juriaen money, and also his maid for a wife, if he would renounce his faith. But Juriaen would fain abide by the truth, and said to the earl, "Neither your maid, your possessions, nor your money, can bring me to God. I have made a better choice; for that I hope to strive." There came, likewise, a valiant visitor to Willem, who made him fair promises, and said he would take him with him to England, and very nearly enticed him into his deceitful net; but the Lord preserved and helped him. 2 Macc. vii. 24. 2 Macc. vi. 18.

As the time of their departure drew nigh when they should prepare themselves to be offered, for which they greatly longed, they were both brought out of prison and taken into the earl's house, into a hall, at night, at one o'clock. There they used many proud contemptuous expressions to them, and troubled them greatly. Juriaen kept silence, and Willem answered little. This lasted the remainder of the night till it began to be day, between dark and light; and then they went in haste with the two prisoners to the Rhine, where they were to be drowned. Phil. ii. 17.

When Juriaen saw that they proceeded thus hastily to the Rhine with them so early in the morning, he called to the earl, saying, "Most honourable count, where is now the promise that you made us? For you told us, that you would put us to death in broad day light." No one turned back for these words; but they led them to the place

where they should suffer, namely, to the Rhine. Thus was the saying of David fulfilled, where he says, *They have slain the righteous privily. The Lord forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

Psa. xxxvii. 32. Luke xxiii. 34.

When they were brought to the water (being in a boat), Willem undressed himself, and laid his hands upon his feet, in order to let them bind him; for he thought to be the first to arrive at home, and be drowned. But this was not to be. They made him put on his clothes again, and told him that he should wait.

Rom. xii. 1. Juriaen was, therefore, the first to prepare to be offered up; and, being now ready to die, he took a brotherly leave of Willem, and they kissed each other with the holy kiss of charity. Juriaen was then thrown overboard, and drowned in the Rhine. In death he bore testimony that he was a member of the body of Christ, and shall receive from his hand, through grace, the crown on the hill of Zion, and rejoice for ever with Him.

2 Cor. i. 5. 2 Esdras ii. 45.

When Juriaen was drowned, the executioner said to Willem, "Put on your clothes; I shall take you on shore, and there strike off your head."

For this Willem was willing and ready, by God's grace, saying, "What God permits you may do with me." When they came on shore they set Willem at liberty. The executioner said, "Go your way." Whether they did this because Willem had been a priest, and that they must have degraded him, before putting him to death, is not known; or, whether they preferred setting him free to taking such trouble about him.

Here follows an exhortation, which Juriaen Friesen sent from prison.

I proclaim to you a new message and good tidings by the word of the Lord, O ye people! which is, that you

should turn unto God from your sinful lives, that your sins may be forgiven you. Cleanse your hearts. Let the world go with all its false appearances, which it deceitfully places before your eyes.

I announce to you the great joy which I experience, as Christ the Son of God has promised, saying: *I will not leave you orphans,* they that trust in me I will help bear their griefs, and will deliver them out of all trouble; for He hath himself bound up and healed our foul offensive wounds, which no other could do. Without merit he healed us; when we were still enemies he washed us with pure water, and sent us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. This the faithful, beneficent Saviour Christ hath promised; if we cleave to Him and bring forth good fruit, he will give us a mouth and wisdom, as his divine word makes mention; if we diligently live according to his will, he will give us such a mouth that none of the wise of this world, who still abide in sin and miss the truth, shall be able to gainsay it.

John xiv. 18.

Luke x. 34.

Rom. v. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 36.

John xiv: 16.

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Matt. vii. 17.

Luke xxi. 15.

I find daily that, like as the raging waves of the sea driven by fierce winds throw up their filth and mud, and are never still; so also, if there were anything good amongst these people it would surely appear. As the flowers of the field perish, so it fares with them who reflect too late; *for the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.*

Isa. lvii. 20.

Isa. xl. 7.

I find another thing that interests me deeply; it is that many will knock and say, "Lord, open unto us, and let us also enter in;" to whom the Lord will say: "I know you not;" and that it will not help them to say: "We have believed that thou art the true God, and thine anointed, thy Son, whom the Jews despised." If these continue to commit iniquity, terror shall seize them, and they shall cry: "Woe, woe!" over all the priests of Baal, who deceived them here, who now sit in Moses' seat, persecute Christ

Luke xiii. 25.

1 Kings xviii.

Matt. xxiii.

and worship Baal, saying: "Do after our words and not
Matt. iii. 7. after our works;" by which they show that they do not walk uprightly. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come, and to escape the damnation of hell?" May not the Lord say to them: "Were you so wise that you knew me; why then did you not seek me when following after my Father's kingdom? therefore,
Matt. vii. 23. depart now from me, all ye hypocrites, with the devil and his angels, into the lake that burneth with fire and into everlasting perdition."

But you, my brethren and sisters, who are called to the
Rev. xix. 7. marriage of the Lamb, heartily prepare yourselves in this last time, and wait until the supper be ready; let not the food that is set before you be taken from you that you
2 John viii. perish not of hunger; cleave fast to Jesus Christ; see that
Matt. xxiv. 4. you lose not that which you have wrought; be not led
Matt. x. 28. astray by any one on earth, nor be afraid of the princes of this world, for when they appear before the presence of Christ they will all be put to shame.

Turn now to the Lord, for now is the accepted time; let not the world cause you to err, and be not deceived. And ye that are on the sea be vigilant, that ye perish not; believe in the Lord with your whole heart, so shall ye be
Rev. xix. 16. safe in the tempest. May the King of kings, to whom all
1 Pet. v. 6. things are known, support us with his strong hand, that we may never, through any adversity, depart from him; but that we may faithfully cleave to his word unto death. For this
Matt. vii. 14. I will cheerfully resign my life, and through Christ walk
John xiv. 6. Matt. xi. 29. in the narrow path; by his help I will willingly bear his yoke, and in this yoke alone drive my plough. O God! may it come to pass that the work begun in me shall be performed to such a blessed end to the salvation of my soul and to thy glory! and this by thy power; richer I could not become, nor be raised to higher dignity! I would for this glorify and praise thee through Jesus Christ thy Son.

Dear brethren and sisters; this is written by me in my hard imprisonment, and I present it to you as a lesson. I, Juriaen Friesen, have meditated hereon in the night while other people slept; I hope that the broad day will be clear and shine bright. O Lord! speedily come to me here in prison; loosen my chains; take from me my bonds, and defend me from evil; then I shall stand before thee! Matt. xii. 50.

Brethren, would you rejoice my spirit, and understand the bottom of my heart? guard against sin; so shall you see clearly. Do you desire to understand, in the spirit, the divine laws? open your hearts to the Lord and he will grant you the same. Phil. iv. 4.

MARTIJNTGEN AELMEERS.—1562.

In the year 1562, at Hondschote, in Flanders, was apprehended a young female, named Martijntgen Aelmeers, of Steenwijk, because she had been baptized upon the profession of her faith, and ordered her dealings and conversation according to the precepts of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Mark xvi. 16.

After great steadfastness she was condemned to death and committed to the flames, presenting to God a living and acceptable sacrifice, and escaping the punishment of everlasting fire. Mark xiii. 13. Rom. xii. 1. Matt. xxv. 40.

NIKASEN VAN AELMEERS.—1562.

In the same year, Nikasen van Aelmeers, the brother of the above Martijntgen, was, for the faith and divine truth, apprehended at Bruges, in Flanders. Not being drawn Acts viii. 3.

Rom. viii. 38. John xv. 27. aside from his belief by any pain or torture, he was condemned and burned, as an upright witness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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[298] KAREL VAN DE VELDE, WITH PROENTGEN HIS WIFE; FRANCOIS DE SWARTE, WITH KLAESKEN HIS WIFE; JASPER, THE SHOEMAKER; CHARLES DE WAEL, AND MARTIJNE AMARE.—1562.

John xviii. 38. Matt. xxiv. 13. Rev. vi 10 In the year 1562, there were apprehended at Hondschote, in Flanders, seven persons, for their testimony to the truth, viz.:—Karel van de Velde, from Ghent, with Proentgen, his wife; François de Swarte, of Belle, with Klaesken, his wife: Jasper, the shoemaker; Charles de Wael, a young journeyman; and Martijne Amare, a young woman, who all firmly adhered to the truth, and to God's word. Five, namely, the four men and the young woman, were, very shortly after their apprehension, burned for their faith; but the two wives, being sisters, were some time afterwards privately drowned in a tub. One of them, seeing that they were about to be murdered privately, complained; for she would rather have publicly borne witness to the truth by her death. Her sister said, "It is all one; God sees it all, who will reward us, and avenge our wrong."

Rev. ii. 7. Thus did all these, as valiant champions, wrestle through and obtain the privilege of eating of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

JAN GRENDEL.—1562.

In the year 1562, there came a man from Oudewater, to Goes, whose name was Jan Grendel, of Courtrai, in Flan-

ders. On the same evening in which he came into the town, he was arrested by the sheriff Uytwyk, who, having brought him into his house, inquired concerning his faith, of which he made an open confession. He was then lodged in prison where he lay about a year. This sheriff Uytwyk not conducting himself well in his office, was deposed, and another of the name of Floris Schack succeeded him. Under his direction, after many attempts and sufferings, he was publicly burned in the market place, during Lent in the year 1563.

Acts viii. 3.

Luke xxiv. 26.

John xvi. 2.

FRANCISCUS VAN DER SACH, AND ANTONIUS WELSCH.—1562.

In the year 1562, the brother Fraciscus van der Sach, a native of Rovigo, in Italy, a minister of the word of God (being still on probation), with another, his fellow messenger, named Antonius Welsch, was apprehended at Capo d'Istria, about a hundred Italian miles from Venice, as they were returning to the church in Germany, accompanied by many people. However, the people were not apprehended with them, but were let go. They placed iron fetters on the feet of Franciscus as a criminal, and conducted them both, each separately from the other, to Capo d'Istria, where they exercised them with temptations and infernal assaults, as was their custom. No effort was spared to draw them into their snares, to make them stumble, and to cause them through cowardice to fall away from God. Franciscus especially was sorely assaulted; but they valiantly resisted it all. After they had been heard and examined on all matters, at Capo d'Istria, they remained for three days bound with iron fetters on their hands and feet, and were then sent to Venice. During the journey they had to lie still for three days and nights

Acts vi. 4.

Luke xxi. 17.

Acts xii. 6.

Deut. xx. 5

owing to the tempestuousnes of the sea. In the mean time they comforted each other, and animated one another
Matt. x. 22, and xxiv. 13. to steadfastness and perseverance. Thus the distress they suffered, from the iron fetters and in other ways, was scarcely felt, although they caused them great pain by day and night.

On the first day of September of the said year they arrived at Venice, and were immediately immured, sepa-
Acts xxii. 4. rately from each other, in the dark prison of the chief council. They there lay a whole month, and were then brought before three temporal, and also some so-called spiritual judges, who sat in great pomp, and most sumptuously clad. They asked the brother Franciscus if he remained of the same mind as when he had replied to the examiners and judges who had conversed with him at Capo d'Istra, and if he still held that to be the truth? He said to them, "I hold it to be the truth; and it is the
John xvii. 17. truth."

They then asked him, if he believed what the holy catholic, apostolical, Christian church believes? To which he answered, "Concerning the faith, I believe all the articles of the apostolical Christian faith." They afterwards questioned him concerning baptism, the sacrament, confession, and many other things; but when he had with solid intelligence, answered every thing, they pressed him
1 Cor. iv. 12. very hard, reproved him very severely, and then ordered him again to prison. They also had the brother Antonius
Matt. x. 32. brought before them, who likewise made a good confession of faith.

Shortly after this, they again questioned Franciscus, particularly upon infant baptism; but accomplished nothing
[299] to their mind. They afterwards had them once more brought up and discoursed with them. They also sent monks to them, who did nothing else, when they answered their questions, than call them heretics, and contradictors

of the councils, telling them that if they would not recant, they must die; and therewith they had them conducted back again to prison.

Soon after this, the judges once more sent a monk, an inquisitor, to speak with them concerning the faith. He first asked them if they were of the church of the upper country?[f] To which Franciscus replied, "Yes." The monk said that was the first error; and asked, if he had likewise broken bread with them? When Franciscus acknowledged that he had, the monk said that is also an error; and so he proceeded all through. Whatever was their answer, the monk always said that they were heretics and deceivers. Acts ii. 42.

The monk likewise inquired, "Tell me, who is the head of the church?" Franciscus answered, "Christ." The monk said, "That is likewise an error." On this Franciscus rejoined, "You call us heretics, but you are yourself a heretic, and not we; for Christ is surely the head of his church." "But," said the monk, "the pope is, here upon earth." Franciscus replied, "A body with two heads is a monstrous thing." Eph. i. 22, and v. 23.

The monk again began to call him heretic, and to admonish him to recant. But the brother Franciscus said, that he could not recant before he had proved it to him by the holy scriptures. "We are not bound," said the monk, "to prove it to you by the scriptures." They were then led back to prison. There Franciscus drew up in writing, and gave in, his confession and defence.

After they had lain a long time in confinement, in all about two years, and had, in many disputations, always remained steadfast in the truth they had received and confessed; they were both condemned to death, and in the year 1564 were thrown into the sea at Venice and Mark xiii. 18.

[f] [That is of the Tyrol, in which were many baptists.]

drowned.[g] But at the judgment day of the Lord the sea shall give up her dead. Then such murderers of the godly will be severely recompensed, and will have to
Zech. ii. 8. acknowledge, with great terror, how great a crime against
Acts ix. 5. God it is thus to injure his faithful ones.

JAN DE SWARTE, KLAESKEN HIS WIFE; CLAES, CHRISTIAEN, HANS, MAHIEU, HIS FOUR SONS; PERCEVAL VAN DEN BERGE, JAN MAES, PIETER THE SHOEMAKER; HENDRIK AERTS, HATMAKER, JANNEKEN CABILJAUS HIS WIFE, CALLEKEN STEENS, HERMAN.—1563.

Jan de Swarte, a man of an excellent character, from
Eph. v. 25. Nipkerke, and his wife and children, came to the knowledge of the truth, and were united to the church of God.
Acts vi. 5. He was afterwards chosen and ordained to be a minister of the church. In this office he, according to his ability, and in meekness, so conducted himself (not only as deacon
1 Cor. xii. 4. by caring for the poor, but also, according to the gift he
2 Tim. ii. 15. had received from God, in the dispensation of the word of exhortation) that he became greatly endeared to all that knew him.

2 Tim. iii. 12. But as Paul said in olden time, that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, so also it happened to him. On this account he lived in various towns and places in Flanders, as at Hondschote, Ryssel, Werwyk, Menin, and lastly at Hallewin, occupying himself chiefly with weaving narrow cloth. From the earnings of his labour he gave very affectionately and liberally to

[g] [In the MS. Cronickel these martyrs are said to have suffered in the year 1565. Their names are spelt Franzisko von der Saag and Antonius Valch, fol. 93.]

the poor; not only to the necessities of the household of faith, but to all generally; whereby, to God's praise and honour, he left a good report behind him. In being hospitable and affording accommodation as the scripture teaches, he was not negligent; for at the time of his apprehension, a brother from Doornik, named Perceval van den Berge, born at Zwevegem, was staying with him, and another, come from Hondschote, named Jan Maes. 2 Cor. viii. 1. Gal vi. 12. Rom. xii. 13

At the same time there were several pious brethren and sisters residing at Hallewin, of whom the pastor N., of the castle, being envious, he treacherously betrayed them to the dean Ronse, the inquisitor of Flanders, who, on a Saturday night, the 7th of March, 1563, came in the silence of the night accompanied by many officers of Ryssel,[b] and surrounding several houses ran within, seizing Jan de Swarte, with Klaesken his wife and his four sons, viz. Klaes, Christiaen, Hans, and Mahieu who was only about sixteen years of age; together with Perceval van den Berge, and Jan Maes above-mentioned; besides these, he also apprehended one Pieter the shoemaker, with Jacomijntgen his wife, which Jacomijntgen did not remain steadfast; also one Hendrik Aerts, a hatter, with Janneken Cabeljaus his wife; and another sister Kalleken Steens, the wife of a brother named Augustin. Matt. xxvi. 14. [300] Matt. xxvi. 31.

When Jan de Swarte was apprehended, the two youngest sons were not at home, but came in during the time. As they were approaching the house, the neighbours warned them, and told them who were in the house, and that their father and mother were arrested. The one said to the other, "Let us not run away, but die with father and mother." Meanwhile Jan de Swarte was led

[b] [Or Lille; Ryssel is the Flemish and German name. This town is now the capital of the French department of the Nord, and is strongly fortified. It is one of the principal seats of the cotton manufacture in France.]

out of the house a prisoner, and seeing his sons, said to them, "Children, will you go with me to the new Jerusalem?" They said, "Yes, father, we will;" and they were led captive with them.

All these were conducted prisoners together to Ryssel, and there strictly guarded in the castle. Jan was placed by himself in a dungeon called Paradise. It was so small that he could not stand upright in it, nor lie down at full length.

1 Pet. iv. 8. It happened one day, that several brethren and sisters (moved by love and compasion) came from outside the Tob. i. 13. town, and stood over against the castle, calling out over the fortification, and comforting the prisoners. Amongst them was a brother named Herman. Being observed by Acts viii. 3. one of the city officers, who had gone out secretly, he also was apprehended.

After ten days' imprisonment, the inquisitor delivered over these prisoners into the hands of the temporal powers, who brought forward, first, Jan de Swarte, with Klaes his son; Pieter, the shoemaker; Hendrik Aerts, the hat-Mark xiii. 13. maker; Perceval van den Berge, and Jan Maes. Because Isa. v. 20. they adhered valiantly and without wavering to the truth of God, they were all six condemned to death, and were conveyed in a waggon to the market-place, where a scaffold, with earth and stakes, had been prepared. There they were drawn up, the one before, the other behind; and each two bound fast to a stake.

While going to death the clock struck. Jan asked what it was o'clock? He was told, "Four." On this he comforted himself, saying, "By five o'clock we hope to be in our lodge, or rest." His son Klaes said, "We must die, because we believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of the Matt. xvi. 16. John vi. 51. eternal God, is from heaven, and not of the earth."

They had put a gag in Pieter's mouth to hinder him from speaking. When they stood at the stakes, wood and

straw were piled about them, to which fire being put, they were burned alive to ashes.

A few days afterwards, Klaesken, the wife of Jan de Swarte, with her three sons, and Herman, remaining unmoved in the love of God, were all five condemned to death by the magistrates, and burned alive. As pious witnesses of Christ they continued faithful unto the end.

Rom. v. 5. Acts xxii. 15.

At the end of nearly a year, after a very lengthened imprisonment, as pious steadfast witnesses of divine truth, Janneken Cabeljaus, and Kalleken Steens, sentenced to die, were cast alive into the fire, and burned to ashes.

Acts xxii. 20.

It came to pass that the pastor of the castle, N., who had betrayed these dear friends of God, was very severely punished. For his flesh became so putrified, that pieces fell off from his body, or were sometimes cut off, and no cure could be found for it. It once happened, that a large piece of putrid flesh, which had fallen or was cut from his body, was eaten up by a dog before his eyes. What then was the state of his mind is easily imagined, the more so, when he remembered this as the fulfilment of a curse said to have been pronounced upon him, that he would see with his eyes the dogs eat his flesh.

Matt. xxvi. 14. 2 Mac. ix. 5.

It also happened, that while the pastor, or priest, was lying ill, a man came to visit him. When the priest complained of his great misery, the man said to him, "It is the coals of the fire at Ryssel." This greatly displeased the priest; but he was obliged to endure such scoffing, as well as the punishment with which God had visited him. He at last died most miserably, as was of old the case with Antiochus and Herod.[i]

2 Mac. ix. 9. Acts xii. 23.

[i] [Van Braght also mentions the martyrdom of three men at Ghent, and one at Zierick, as having taken place this year, fol. 300. The cruelties inflicted on the baptists, as well as on the Lutherans and Reformed in the Netherlands, are mentioned in a letter of Rollius to Bullinger, dated August 29th. Ottius, Ann. Anab. p. 141.]

[301] The proclamation of the Emperor Charles V., repeatedly referred to, published in the year 1550, and confirmed by Philip II., king of Spain, 1556, and again in the year 1560, was now for the third time renewed and confirmed, to the ruin and destruction of the harmless and unresisting believers in Christ, as may be seen in the great book of proclamations at Ghent, and alleged by William, Prince of Orange, in his defence against his gainsayers.[k]

[A further proclamation was issued from Brussels on the 29th of March, by which the inhabitants of Flanders were forbidden to remove to Holland without certificates from the priests and magistrates. Strict inquiries were to be made into the characters of every settler, and proof furnished that their children had been baptized according to the rites of Rome. Oaths were to be administered to midwives that they would secure the christening of every infant, or report to the magistrate any obstruction to the act. Registers of christenings were to be kept, and at certain times exhibited to the authorities. Conventicles were to be diligently sought out and repressed. Parents must send their children to church and to school; the houses of booksellers were to be carefully inspected, and books examined; even pedlars' packs were not to escape the scrutiny. Public notice was to be everywhere given that the people were to attend mass every Sunday and holiday. A month's continuous absence to be punished at the discretion of the judges, while the contumacious should be banished.[l]]

On this followed no inconsiderable oppression, as may be seen from the narratives of the following martyrs.

[k] [P. 165, edit. 1569.]

[l] [Brandt's Hist of Ref. i. 143, 144.]

DANIEL KALVAERT.—1564.

Daniel Kalvaert, born at Thielt, in Flanders, was apprehended in the year 1564, at Armentieres,[m] for the testimony of the truth. From thence he was taken to Ryssel, but after some scrutiny and torture, was again brought to Armentieres, under the guard of forty men. There, by the sentence of the magistrates, he was condemned to be burned alive. His offering he cheerfully presented, after which his ashes were thrown into the river Lys.

John xviii. 37.

Rom. xii. 1.

PIETER OF OOST-HOVEN.—1564.

Pieter Floris, said to be from Oost-hoven, born at Nipkerke, in Flanders, was arrested for the cause of divine truth, at Armentieres, in the year 1564. Through much solicitation and suffering he was induced to renounce his faith, with promises of life and liberty; but on returning to his prison, and coming to himself, he reflected how greatly he had suffered himself to be deceived. For although he might escape temporal death for a short time, he should have to taste eternal death. This produced in him such anxiety and sorrow, that he turned to Almighty God, and like Peter, with bitter tears implored forgiveness for the great crime he had committed, and for a firmer mind than he had before shown.

John xvii. 17.

Rev. xiv. 11.

His prayer did not remain unheard. When he was again brought before the magistrates, he recalled his recantation, and from that time forward boldly confessed his faith and remained steadfast therein. He was at last

Matt. x. 22. Acts v. 41.

[m] [In the French department of the Nord.]

condemned to death, to which he went with joyful constancy. He was strangled and burned.

STEVEN DE GRAET AND SYNTGEN.—1564.

In the year 1564 were likewise apprehended, at Ghent,
Acts xii. 3. in Flanders, for the truth's sake, a brother named Steven de Graet, with Syntgen, his aged mother. They were both strong in faith, and persevered therein amidst all
John xvi. 2. temptations and sufferings, even unto death, which they were called to suffer publicly for the name of Christ. They shall also publicly praise the Lord above, before the heavenly throne, and help sing the joyful and new song
Rev. xiv. 3. to the honour of the Lamb, and of him that sitteth on the throne.

PIERIJNTGEN KETELS, LEENTGEN HER MOTHER, WITH PIERIJNTGEN AND MARIJNTGEN VAN MALE.—1564.

Matt. xii. 50. In the same year, at Ghent, four sisters of Christ were apprehended, viz., Pierijntgen Ketels, with Leentgen, her mother; and two sisters, Pierijntgen and Marijntgen van
Gal. i. 16. Male. They did not confer with flesh and blood, but
Isa. xl. 29. with God, who could strengthen them, for whose name's sake, after many assaults endured with great constancy, they laid down their lives in the cloister of St. Peter's, outside Ghent.

2 Esdras ii. 46. Matt. xxv. 10. On the hill of Zion they shall receive their crown, and be joyfully welcomed by their Bridegroom.

PIETER VAN DER MEULEN, 1564.

Shortly afterwards, at Ghent, a brother, Pieter van der Meulen valiantly contended for his faith in Christ. With a firm faith and trust in God, he withstood all that sought to make him renounce it, even unto death, when he departed out of this world, and entered with Christ into rest and peace; to unite, at the last day, in judging those who here judged him.

Matt. xii. 50. Eph. vii. 12.

Luke xxiii. 42. Matt. vii. 2.

MAEYKEN BOOSERS,

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FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, BURNED TO ASHES IN THE CITY OF DOORNIK, THE 18TH SEPT., ANNO 1564.

A confession and consolatory Epistle of Maeyken Boosers, being a prisoner at Doornik, where she sealed her faith with her blood.

The everlasting unfathomable grace of God, and the power of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, my beloved friends and brethren. I desire to inform you that I am in health as to the body, but with the spirit it might indeed be better. I find in myself weakness; but my hope is in God, who strengtheneth the weak, and comforts the oppressed. My heart longs continually to be made meet in his eyes; that I may complete, to his honour, that which he hath begun in me. Therefore, I beseech you, my beloved brethren, not to forget me; which indeed I observe you do not. I heartily thank you, and hope the Lord will preserve you in his holy truth. I further inform you, that the magistrates inquired who were baptized with me, and if there were none of them in the town. They also wished to know their Christian

Matt. xxiii. 8.

and surnames. I said, "I do not know, and cannot tell;" but it would not avail. They told me that the executioner should strip me. I felt greatly ashamed, and entreated them kindly to believe me; but it was of no use. I then said, "Be it as you will;" and I undressed myself. They led me to the rack and bound me, in order to torture and stretch me. The commissary then told me to name them. I said, "I could not do it." They then released me without my having named any one, for which God be praised. But from the first, they knew Peter and George. I was therefore obliged to name them; but their surnames I did not know. I commend you to the Lord, and the word of his grace. The Lord preserve us all in unity of the faith to the end of life. Amen.

Acts xx. 32.

Eph. iv. 13.

Another Letter of Maeyken Boosers to her parents.

From my inmost heart, I greet you, my dear father and my most beloved mother, with all that are in the house. You will please to understand that I am well and unchanged in mind, the Lord be for ever praised, as I hope through the goodness of God is the case with you. I further thank you heartily for the kind salutation that you wrote me, which greatly rejoiced me, and made known to me your mind, and your kindness, and as a remembrance I will now write you something concerning my imprisonment.

First, The commissary asked me how old I was when I was baptized. I said, "About three or four and twenty." They asked, Why I had done so? I said, "Because God had commanded it." They asked, if I did not know that I had been baptized before. I said, "I know nothing of it; nor hath God commanded it." They asked, if I had had no godfathers or godmothers. I said, "It may

Mark xvi. 16.

be so, they may be dead." They then said, they would send to me some learned men. I said, "You ought to be wise enough to speak to me." But they insisted on sending learned men. They afterwards sent the parish priest of the Frauen-kirk, who came and asked why I had not been, for so long a time, in his church, and how it was that he had had no knowledge of me. I said, that I had kept myself quiet at home. He asked where my church was. I said, "It is not known to you; and, if you knew it, you would not let it be long in peace." We discoursed much concerning baptism. I said that Christ had sent out his apostles into all the world, and they taught the people first to observe all things that he had commanded them, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Children could not learn; but he that believes and is baptized shall be saved. To which they said, that the apostles had baptized whole households. I said, "Yes, but they rejoiced that they believed in God; that children could not do. Christ called children to him, and said, *Of such is the kingdom of heaven;* but he did not command to baptize them." They then adduced the sin of Adam, that children were born therein. I said, that Christ had died for them. I asked them, if they could take away sin by baptism? Young children have no sin, therefore they could not die to sin, and rise again by baptism unto newness of life. The magistrates then said, "Your statement is, he that believes and is baptized shall be saved; is it not?" I said, "Yes."

Matt. xxviii. 19.

Deut. i. 39.

Mark xvi. 15.

Acts xvi. 34.

Matt. xix. 14.

John i. 29.

Rom. vi. 4.

They asked if Christ was not of the flesh of Mary. I said that Mary had conceived him of the Holy Ghost, as the angel told her, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* They asked again, if he had not taken of her

Luke i. 32.

flesh, since he had not brought it from above. I said that
[303] John i. 14. I believed the testimony of John, where he says, *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.* They asked if I did not believe that he was the son of Mary according to the flesh? and the Son of God according to the Spirit? I said that he was God's own and only begotten Son, who is
Heb. vii. 3. without beginning of days and without end of life, and in these last days was born of Mary by the power of the
1 Cor. xv. 47. Holy Ghost. Therefore he is not of the earth, earthy, like Adam, and will not return to the earth. He is the Lord from heaven. Had he flesh from our flesh, he must
Gen. iii. 19. then also see corruption; for God has said, *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;* and that was spoken not alone of Adam, but of all that descend from him.

They then asked me, if I did not believe that the flesh and blood of Christ were in the sacrament? I said, "No;
Mark xvi. 19. he is ascended and sitteth on the right hand of God his Father." They asked, if I did not believe that all the saints are in heaven. I said, "What I have not read I cannot answer. But this I have read, 'The souls of the
Wisd. iii. 1. righteous are in the hands of God, and the pain of death shall not touch them.'" They said very little in reply, but asked what I held concerning Mary. I said, "She was a pure and holy vessel, and blessed above all women;
Luke i. 31. for she was worthy to conceive and bear the Son of God."

They asked if I did not acknowledge that there was a
Matt. vii. 14. purgatory. I said: "Of two ways I find written, the one very broad, leading to destruction; the other very narrow, leading to eternal life." They asked further what I held touching the pope. I said: "I know not the pope, but it is his doctrine that men hold here; I therefore hold him to be like his doctrine." We had much more discourse, but this I write for brevity's sake. Farewell.

Another Letter of Maeyken Boosers to the brethren.

My very dear and beloved brethren in the Lord, I let you know that my heart is greatly comforted and strengthened; the Lord be for ever praised. He upholds us with his right hand, and helps us in the midst of our enemies; John xv. 5. without him I should perish, for they assail me in a variety of ways both spiritual and temporal, as might have been seen this Sunday in the conduct of Monsieur Massaert and an alderman, with another learned layman, who treated me as one of the very worst sect that ever was under heaven. But when I related to them my faith I brought them all to tears, so that they could scarcely speak, and at last they parted from me in a friendly manner.

No more at present. I commend you to the Lord; may he keep and preserve you in his holy truth. I hope it will shortly be over with me; for I desire nothing more ardently than that I may please the Lord and die happy. Amen.

A Testament of Maeyken Boosers, to her children.

A hearty and affectionate salutation to you, my beloved children; listen to your mother who is now in bonds for the truth. It hath so pleased God that all that will live godly must suffer persecution; I am therefore content and 2 Tim. iii. 12. comforted that the servant follows his Lord; his blessed Matt. x. 24. will be done. Had it pleased him he would have pre- Luke xi. 2. vented these bonds, my dear children; it has been so from the beginning that the righteous must suffer; the unrighteous always bear rule, but their day will soon come when they shall lament and exclaim in their agony, *Mountains, fall on us, and hills, cover us* from the presence of the Luke xxiii. 30. Lord. Alas! when the righteous shall shine forth as the Wisd. iii. 7. sun, the ungodly shall go into everlasting fire! Oh, beloved

John v. 39. children, search the scriptures and conform yourselves to
Matt. xxv. 34. them, that you may hear the charming words, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.* Pray to the Lord for wisdom; learn to fear God, so shall
Rom. xii. 2. you obtain true understanding. Imitate not the world in pride, dancing, and vain babbling, but exhibit, in your
1 Pet. iii. 5. walk, a godly life; adorn yourselves like holy women; receive the scriptures and live agreeably thereto, that your souls may be saved, and that we, after this life, may meet again. Almighty God, the King of kings, grant you his grace according to the riches of his goodness, that you may be strengthened in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts, and lead you into all truth. I beseech you, my dear children, be at peace among yourselves; it is a fruit of the Spirit; help each other willingly, without disputings; be ever mindful of the poor; give freely of all you have; make to yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon; set your affection on what is eternal and not on what is temporal; seek the heavenly and not the earthly; *For all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass,* that to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven. The glory of man passeth away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; the lust of the eyes, the pride of life,* which is not of God but of the world; the world will pass away, with all that is therein, but he that doeth the will of the Father endureth for ever.

Heb. xiii. 16.
Luke xvi. 9.
Col. iii. 2.
Isa. xl. 6.
1 Pet. i. 24.
1 John ii. 15.
[304]
1 Cor. vii. 31.

My children, act agreeably to the will of God; I, your mother, hope to go before you in the way; observe wherein, and how I go before you; seek not the honour of this world, but account it an honour to suffer for the name of our God; for he who was the supreme King was not ashamed to leave his glory, and to come into the world and suffer the most shameful death for us. He was stricken and disfigured without being guilty, so that no part of his

1 Pet. iii. 14.
Phil. ii. 7.

blessed body was left whole; such love he bore towards us, and therein left us an example that we should follow in his footsteps. He is the light that came into the world that all that follow him should not walk in darkness but have the light of life. The Lord grant that that same light may shine upon you, and that you may walk therein. John viii. 12.

Another short Letter from the same Mother to her Children.

My children, I greet you very heartily, and return you your writings that you may redeem your promises, that you have therein made me; be always obedient to those who instruct you in righteousness, and chastise you for your transgressions. Farewell, for this world; adieu. My dear children, fear God; eschew all evil.

Another Letter of Macyken Boosers to her Father and Mother.

My very dear father and mother, from my inmost heart I direct my prayer to the Lord that he will comfort you and me with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, according to the promise of the Lord which he made to his disciples, saying: I go to the Father, and will send you another Comforter which the world cannot receive, for it knoweth him not. Thus, my dear father and mother, be comforted, and await with patience what the Lord will do with me; I likewise patiently await his consolations, and what has passed I esteem but as a wind, from which I feel no distress; the Lord be praised, in whom I hope. It is he that comforts the lowly, and puts down the mighty from their seats; though tribulation now attends us, yet we know well that the day of the Lord will soon come, and that all the ungodly will be destroyed. God will judge them, John xiv. 16. Luke i. 48. 2 Cor. v. 10.

without respect of persons, and reward each one according to his works.

Rom. xii. 1. Thus, my dear and greatly beloved father and mother, think not of me; let the Lord complete his work. I hope that he hath designed me, a poor unworthy creature, to be a sacrifice acceptable to him. I have hoped in his mercy that he will not enter into judgment with me; should he deal with me according to my deserts I should be worthy of eternal death, but I trust the Lord will have mercy on me.

I have once more been brought before the dean, but we Matt. xxv. 32. each maintained our own views. On separating he said to me: "If you remain in this faith you are lost for ever." I said: "How can you so speak, seeing God will judge?" "Yes," said he, "I dare so speak, for it will be so." Maester Klaes then followed me and asked: "Where did you hide yourself so long? I have been long seeking you." I said: "You have me now, however." "I have not," said he; "if you were in our hands we should keep you longer than these will, I think."

I commend you, my dear father and mother, to the Lord who will preserve you and me to the end; be not 2 Mac. vii. 11. sorrowful on my account, but rejoice that the Lord counts me worthy; for I will readily resign, for his sake, these members which the Lord gave me. Farewell, and always.

Another Letter of Maeyken Boosers to the Brethren and Sisters.

My dearly beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, beloved from my inmost heart; I once more salute you with the peace of the Lord; may the same abide with you for ever. Amen.

My enemies still continue to harass me about baptism, but of the incarnation of Christ they say nothing. The dean stated to them my faith, and they asked me nothing more than whether I believed that Christ was the son of David. I said, that he was the Son of the living God. Matt. xvi. 16. "Oh! oh!" said the dean. The magistrates said: "Is it Acts xiii. 23. not written, of the seed of David, according to the flesh?" The dean answered them; my answer was not attended to. He said repeatedly that I lied, because I opposed him by saying that he could not show me that the apostles had baptized children. They assailed me altogether, and said that no one could enter the kingdom of heaven except he John iii. 3. were born of water and the Spirit; they asked, hastily, if [305] I did not admit that. I said: "That scripture belongs not to children but to adults who have ears to hear." They then stood up and said: "That is your opinion."

I expect, my dear friends, to be fetched once more before them to-morrow; I beseech you to pray to the Lord for me that he will direct my lips to his praise and honour. I commend you for ever into the hands of God, and kindly request you to receive with favour my simple writing; for I seek only, from the simplicity of my heart, to please God; I have no other wish than that. Oh might I thus, in my calling, be acceptable to the King of kings and Lord of 2 Tim. vi. 15. lords! then shall I have been born at a blessed time. Peace! no more parting after this! Consider this an eternal adieu!

After this, Maeyken Boosers was burned to ashes, at Doornik, committing her soul into the hands of the Lord.

WILLEBOORT CORNELIS,

PUT TO DEATH AT MIDDLEBURG IN ZEALAND, FOR THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, THE 14th SEPTEMBER, ANNO 1564.

A Letter of Willeboort Cornelis, written in prison at Middleburg where he lay a prisoner, and which he sealed with his blood.

Rom. i. 7. John iii. 16. 1 Cor. i. 4. John xvi. 13. The grace and peace of God, our heavenly Father, which is given us by Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, comfort you in all your tribulation, my dearly beloved sister in the Lord. May the Holy Spirit lead you into all truth and righteousness to the end; and the powerful hand of God preserve you and me in an even course, walking uprightly even to the end. Amen.

My dear sister, heartily beloved in the Lord, in this miserable and sorrowful world we must be esteemed the prey of all, as the prophet informs us. Indeed, Christ Jesus himself saith, *Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.* We are esteemed as deceivers, yet true; and are become a gazing-stock. We are in all things oppressed, but are not distressed; we are assailed, but not affrighted. We suffer persecution, but are not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter; but in all these things we are more than conquerors, for His sake who hath loved us. For, my dear love, we know that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. We know that as long as we are at home in the body, we are on pilgrimage and absent from the Lord. Therefore, says Peter, *I beseech you, as pilgrims and strangers, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.* Therefore, my dear love, although you have, with Abraham, left our native country, be not slack in the fulfilment of your duty. Be fervent in spirit; redeem the time. *Be joyful in hope, patient in*

Isa. lix. 15. Matt. x. 22. 2 Cor. vi. 8. Rom. viii. 36. Acts xiv. 22. 2 Cor. v. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 11. Gen. xii. 4. Rom. x 11.

tribulation, instant in prayer, distributing to the necessity of saints, and given to hospitality. For, my dear love, *though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day; for our affliction, which is temporary and light, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* for us, who look not at the things which are seen, but at those which are not seen.

Therefore, my dear sister, look always to the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus, *who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.* Remember him *who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind. For, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he loveth and receiveth.* For our Saviour hath suffered so much himself for our sake, so that Esaias may well say, *He hath no form nor comeliness, and there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was* the most *despised and rejected of men,* full of sorrows and infirmities. He was so despised that we hid our faces from him. He might well say by the prophet, *They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me gall and vinegar to drink. They all laugh me to scorn, they shake the head, and shoot out the lip against me.* Yea, as he says by the prophet, *I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.*

Heb. xii. 2.

Isa. liii. 5.

Psa. lxix. 21.

Psa. xxii. 7.

My dear sister in the Lord, has the Head thus suffered? the members must follow. Let it not grieve you that you must yet wander in this world or wilderness; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, according to that good purpose of your heart. My dear love, let your light always shine in the midst of this wicked and perverse generation; that they who speak against you as an evil doer, may see your good works and glorify God in the day of visitation.

Eph. i. 22.

Rom. xii. 5.

Phil. ii. 13.

Matt. v. 16.

1 Pet. ii. 12.

My sister in the Lord, beloved from my heart, await the time with patience. Be longsuffering until the coming

James v. 7. of our Lord. *Behold the husbandman waiteth patiently for*
[306] *the precious fruit of the earth,* waiting long until he receive the early and latter rain. Therefore, be patient; establish your heart, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. My dear sister, you have heard of the patience of Job, and have also heard the end of the Lord, that he is pitiful and of tender mercy.

Matt. x. 22. My dear love, let us hold fast that which we have unto
1 Thess. v. 24. the end. He is faithful that hath promised us. My dear
1 Pet. v. 7. sister, be ever humble. Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you, and for us all. We know our reward beforehand, if we steadfastly keep his commandments unto the end, according to our weakness, and with
Col. iii. 14. patience wait for it. Therefore, says Paul, *Love is the*
1 Pet. iv. 8. *bond of perfectness.* And Peter says, *Have fervent love among yourselves; for love shall cover a multitude of sins.* My dear sister in the Lord, although we are the jest of the world, and are compelled to go and wander in foreign lands, it will not prevent us, when the Lord shall say,
Matt. xxv. 34. *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Then will the child be born. Then shall there be no more reproach.
Isa. xxv. 8. Then shall all our enemies be conquered. Then shall the tears be wiped away from our eyes. Then shall we have no more sorrow. Then shall we drink of the fountain of
Rom. xv. 4. life freely. *For whatsoever things were written, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.*

The God of patience and comfort, grant you to be like-minded with each other, according to Jesus Christ, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; wherefore, receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Adieu, my dear sister in the Lord. Amen.

By me, Willeboort Cornelis, written in bonds.

PRIJNTGEN MAELBOUTS AND MARTIJNTGEN.

1564.

In the year 1564, the 12th of November, was beheaded with the sword at Ghent, in Flanders, a certain Prijntgen Maelbouts, the widow of Jacob de Backer, brother of Pauls of Menin; and with her, Martijntgen Maelbouts, her sister, a young woman born at Thielt, not on account of any evil deeds, but alone for the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a good conscience. They had separated themselves (agreeably to the direction of the holy scriptures) from the popish church of antichrist, as corrupted with many impurities, and filled with the unfruitful works of darkness, and doctrines and commandments of men, in opposition to the holy word of the Lord. They had also united themselves with the true members of Christ, and with them, according to their weak ability, endeavoured to observe their Lord's commandments and ordinances. They were therefore deprived of life by the persecutors and haters of the truth. They cheerfully resigned it to please their Lord and Saviour, in lively hope and assured faith that they should receive again, at the resurrection of the just, the mortal bodies which for his name's sake they here laid down, in greater honour, and reign with God and his saints for ever.

Rev. ii. 13.

Rev. xviii. 4.

1 Cor. vi. 17.

Rev. iii. 18.

2 Tim. ii. 12. 2 Mac. vii. 11, 14. Phil. iii. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 43.

JELIS MATTHIJS,

PUT TO DEATH AT MIDDLEBURG, FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST.—ANNO 1564.

A Letter of Jelis Matthijs, written in prison at Middleburg, in the year 1564, *where he resigned his life for the name of the Lord.*

The foundation of God standeth sure.

2 Tim. ii. 19.

Grace, peace be with you, and the abounding love of God, with the cordial inexpressible love of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the chosen gift of faith revealed to us from God, our merciful gracious Father, through Jesus Christ, and given to his saints, whom he, of his fatherly love, has now chosen, called, and ordained thereto; yea, delivered from the chains and heavy bondage of the everlasting darkness of unbelief, with which this wicked perverse world is bound. According to his fatherly mercy, He hath begotten us again to a lively blessed hope, and translated us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, by whom we have the forgiveness of sins through his blood, that we (my beloved) should henceforth serve him in all obedience, righteousness, and holiness, without fear all the days of our life. May our compassionate gracious Father, help and strengthen us, by the power of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

1 Pet. i. 3.

1 Col. xiv.

Luke i. 75.

Inasmuch as you desired, by your epistles and salutations that I have, at various times, received from you, and also previously through the writing of your dear wife, who herself expressed the same desire that I should write to you, I repeatedly concluded in my mind to do so, according to my small ability. Although I hope that there is [307] properly no need, yet I trust, notwithstanding, that it may increase your confidence and steadfastness. But by reason of my having had a good deal to write, and having been occupied with other things, I have not been able to write you; yet have I always felt a parental concern for you; frequently and ardently beseeching my God, according to my weakness, that he would preserve you both in these terrible perilous times, full of all wickedness, beneath the shadow of his wings; and that he would fill you more and more with his Holy Spirit, and enlighten the eyes of your understanding, that you (my dearly beloved), may rightly learn to know the devices and nets spread for you by the

Eph. i. 18.

devil, and of which he now daily spreads so very many for those that are born again. But in a measure they are not unknown to you; you are well aware what his designs are. Therefore you have been vigilant to the present time, in which I greatly rejoice, and also because your faith grows and increases in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom I have, with tears, in my bonds, begotten you with others, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Ye became followers of me and the Lord, and received the word of the gospel of the cross of Christ, with many groans and much godly sorrow, and became heartily obedient thereto, according to the form of doctrine in which you now stand. Thus you became an ensample to all those in Middleburg who desire to repent, and take up the Saviour's cross. Not only they, but many saints have rejoiced, when beholding your obedience and humility in the fear of God, which I hope will increase from day to day and become more manifest, that it may, my beloved, evidently appear, that you are truly born from above of God the Father, and are transformed by the renewing of your mind. Remember that your conversation be heavenly, namely, after the new man which after God is created in all righteousness and holiness; for, since He is holy who hath called and chosen you to this service, so must you also, according to your ability, maintain a holy, pure, and godly walk in the fear of your God. *For to whom we yield ourselves servants to obey, his servants we are,* as the apostle observes, *whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.*

2 Cor. ii. 11.
2 Thess. i. 3.
1 Thess. i. 6.
John i. 13.
Rom. xii. 2.
Eph. iv. 24.
1 Pet. i. 15.
Rom. vi. 16.

To God be everlasting praise and thanks, my beloved, that you were a servant and handmaid of sin; but are now with me washed and cleansed by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God the Father hath shed on us abundantly through Christ our Saviour. Not for works of righteousness which we

Titus iii. 5.

Eph. ii. 3. had done, for we were by nature children of wrath, even as others; but God, the gracious merciful Father, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, when we were dead in sins and unrighteousness, hath by faith raised us up together with or through Christ his dear Son.

Therefore, my dearly and heartily beloved friends in Christ Jesus, whose souls I fervently love, for which I have a fatherly and godly concern, I exhort and beseech you, as a prisoner of the Lord, that you frequently call to
Heb. x. 32. remembrance the day in which the merciful Father had
2 Cor. iii. 16. compassion on you, and removed the veil from your eyes and heart, which still is over the eyes and hearts of so
Wisd. v. 7. many thousands, who walk in hard ways and know not this way of the Lord, by reason that they are drunk with
Rev. xvii. 2. the wine of the whore of Babylon; namely, the false doctrines with which the whole world is covered. But ye, my beloved, are become sober, and have come out from the midst of her. I hope also that ye will no more
Rev. xviii. 4. partake of her impurities, that ye receive not of her plagues.

Wherefore, be keenly vigilant in righteousness, that after my departure ye be not, my beloved, put to shame in these fearfully perilous times. It is evidently the time of which Christ Jesus and his holy apostles have so diligently warned us. Christ Jesus himself said, that in
Matt. xxiv. 12. many hearts love should wax cold: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. Dearly beloved, reflect well on the words of Christ; let them sink into your hearts. They are not spoken of the world. In them the love of God cannot grow cold; for they have not received it, neither do they know it. But they are spoken of the true Israelites, and you see that in them it is abundantly fulfilled. It is, indeed, grievously to be lamented that the devil and the spirit of the old serpent have obtained such

power and force in this present time, through the manifold subtle dexterous snares he daily lays to catch in the net of unbelief the souls of the regenerate who have escaped from him by the knowledge of God. Some he secures by false doctrine; not alone of the Roman antichrist, for there are now many antichrists in the world. He has 1 John ii. 18.
assumed another form no longer like that of Rome, well [308]
knowing that his game therewith is nearly finished. He has transformed himself, and appears as an angel of light, 2 Cor. xi. 14.
and uses his diligence to come among the children of light to exhibit his wares in a new form. My beloved in the Lord, in past times he came with human institutions and commandments; but he has learned that men will hear the scriptures. He therefore comes now and brings forward many scriptures, so that it almost appears to be right, just as he impudently did with Christ, Matt. iv. 6.
adducing a passage from David, that it was written that he would send his angels who should bear him up in Psa. xci. 11.
their hands, lest he should dash his foot against a stone. Observe, my dearly beloved, he quoted the scripture as it stood; but it was not spoken with such a meaning, or was not so predicted. So these likewise: they bring forth many scriptures, and say boldly that so it stands, whereby the wavering and they that have itching ears to 2 Tim. iv. 3.
hear something new are easily caught in the net he has spread. Others he catches by casual deceitful riches, which at this day drown men in perdition and destruc- 1 Tim. vi. 10.
tion, for covetousness is a root of all evil. Some covet an increase in their temporal goods, and are so occupied therewith that they, in the meantime, forget the exercises of devotion, and are involved in many troubles. Oh! my beloved, it will fare with them as it did with some of the Exod. xvi.
Israelites; they that had gathered much had nothing over, and they that had gathered little had no lack. Therefore, having food and raiment, oh! if men would

2 Tim. vi. 7. therewith be content; for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

Matt. xiii. 22. We see, my beloved, that the words of our gracious Lord Jesus Christ are true; viz. that deceitful riches choke the good seed, the word of God, whereby many come to shame. The third class lose all in the loss or deprivation of their goods, not once seeing or rightly think-

Matt. xiii. 56. ing that they, like the merchant, have found the pearl of greatest price, which indeed is truly worth all, and with which all is not to be compared. The fourth fall away, through the cross and suffering, namely, persecution. The fifth, through the entreaties and prayers of father and mother, friends and relations. The sixth, through wives and children. The seventh, through their own wicked deceitful lusts. The eighth, by growing weary in the way

Num. xiv. 4. of righteousness, and turning again to Egypt and Sodom,

Gen. xix. 26. to live a short time in quietness and peace with the

Rev. xiv. 10. Babylonian whore, and hereafter with her to be tormented with eternal pain.

Observe, all this works and carries on that one spirit, the old serpent that neither slumbers nor sleeps, but walks

1 Pet. v. 8. about seeking whom he may devour. Therefore, resist him with manly courage and a believing heart; be not terrified, although they so lightly forsake the commandments of God. Look not at the slack, idle, and ungodly; let all unfaithful

John vi. 66. servants and false disciples go back and walk no more with their Lord and Master; *we* hope, nevertheless, to abide with Him, and you, with myself, are prepared to suffer whatever he lays upon us. Oh! whither should we go, or what

Psa. cxiv. 7. should we do, if we renounce his commandments! whither should we flee where he would not find us! Oh! heaven and earth must serve him with trembling! mountains and caverns must be affrighted before him, and may not stand

Job iv. 19. in his presence! how much more the children of men who dwell in houses of clay! Oh, my beloved, how shall they

who now so unfaithfully forsake him, excuse themselves when he shall visit them? Alas! grievously is it to be lamented that they have loathed the heavenly bread! and Num. xi. 6. that the only medicine by which the souls of the regenerate are healed is become to them such a deadly enemy, we may well sigh and mourn with the prophet over the ruin Lam. i. of Israel, and Jerusalem the beauteous city of God; and that so many Israelites are destroyed in the wild wilderness of this wicked world, and are by the subtle spirit of the serpent destroyed and slain. Some of the watchmen have fallen away, and the citizens of Jerusalem are in- 1 Pet. v. 8. dolent and sleepy. But he that lurks about the camp gives himself no rest; he is ever on the alert, day and night, to see if any are idle or drowsy, that he may sow his tares in Matt. xiii. 25. their hearts as he has, alas, often done and will do more and more, as I believe; for the more the people of God multiply, the more will he exercise his power amongst them, nor will not cease till some are again submissive to Tob. i. 12. his will. It is permitted him, of God, to harass the godly, [309] and to deceive some that others may be proved.

My dear and from my heart greatly beloved children in the Lord, it is therefore my fatherly prayer and humble desire to you jointly, for the everlasting welfare of your souls, that you henceforth be concerned to continue in the way of righteousness. Be ever mindful from this time how you ought to walk in the house of God, which 1 Tim. iii. 15. is the church of God, to which you are come. It gave me great joy when I heard of it, thanking and praising my God for his Fatherly goodness and grace, which he hath shown in receiving you as his son and daughter; yea, 2 Cor. vi. 18. as heirs of his heavenly inheritance, for whose will you so Rom. viii. 17. willingly submitted yourselves to the yoke and discipline Phil. iii. 7. of the cross, and counted with the holy apostle Paul your gain as loss, that you might win Christ. Therefore take 2 Pet. iii. 17. heed to yourselves, turn not nor waver to the right

hand or the left, that you fall not from your own steadfastness, and that eternal fire be not your portion. But,
Col. ii. 6. my beloved, as you have now put on the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk henceforth in him, being firmly settled
1 Cor. iv. 7. and rooted in his doctrine, that your love grow not cold or abate, and you lose at last what you have received.

I also beseech you by the mercies of our gracious Lord Jesus Christ, that you be not negligent to thank and praise God the compassionate tender Father through Christ his dear Son, both day and night, for the great and unspeakable benefits which he hath bestowed on us
Jer. i. 5. poor miserable creatures. He hath known and chosen us
Matt. xvii. 17. from our mother's womb, that we should live holily and
Matt. x. 32. confess his name in the midst of this perverse and adulterous generation, and hold fast the beginning of the
Luke x. 20. Christian life, even to the end. For although you are now become the heirs of eternal life by obedience to the
Phil. iv. 3. gospel, and are with me and all the saints written in the
Heb. xii. 22. book of life, yea, are come to an innumerable company of
Jer. xvii. 13. angels, He can readily root us up, and record our names as apostates, if we do not faithfully, according to our weakness, walk in the commandments of God unto the end! For we know that the glorious promises, and the crown of everlasting life, lie not at the beginning nor in
Matt. x. 22. the middle. It is he who perseveres and abides faithful
2 Esdras ii. 42. to the end, that shall receive them at the hand of the Lord. It availed Israel little (in whom we have a clear example) that they were delivered by the strong hand of the Lord from the bondage of Pharaoh. The benefits which their faithful and compassionate Father bestowed
Exod. xvi. 5. upon them in the way, were for the most part lost. Notwithstanding he fed them with angels' food, and gave them all that their souls desired, yet they became impatient and murmuring. They endured not their trials in the fear of God, nor received them with submission.

Therefore the Lord was wroth, and destroyed of them at one time three and twenty thousand. O my beloved, reflect on this. It is indeed written for our learning and admonition, as the holy apostle observes, that we should not fall after the same example of unbelief. For what will it avail us, that we have also departed out of the spiritual Egypt and Sodom, and have been delivered from the service of the infernal Pharaoh, through the Red sea of the blood of Christ, and have been baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, on the avowal of our faith, and renouncing ourselves, have entered the ark of the true Noah, Christ Jesus. Oh! my dearly beloved, it cannot help or save us, if we walk not in all the commandments of our God. The apostle John says, *He that saith he knoweth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* But you, my beloved, have been always obedient, not only in my presence, but also much more in my absence; wherefore work out your salvation with fear, and ever walk, after my departure, as it becometh the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Abide in the same spirit and mind. Be not in any wise terrified by all your adversaries, whether inward or outward, *which is to them a token of perdition, but to you of everlasting salvation and that of God.* For, my well beloved, it is not enough that you believe in Christ, you must also suffer for his name; if not by bonds or imprisonment, yet by daily conflicts and assaults, which at this time are many and manifold, and may come upon you still more. God tries and proves his elect in many ways. Bonds and imprisonments are esteemed and looked upon as the greatest trials of faith. But, my beloved, I confess to you that with me they are the least, compared with the perils and assaults that I have experienced in the wild wilderness of the world. Often I knew not, from the terror of my heart and spirit,

1 Cor. x. 6.

Matt. xxvii. 19.

1 Pet. iii. 20.

1 John ii. 4.

Phil. ii. 12.

Phil. i. 27.

Zech. xiii. 9.

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whether I should escape; sighing and crying to my God,
2 Tim. ii. 26. over the manifold, subtle, dexterous snares which the old
Rev. xii. 14. serpent laid; fearful lest I should be taken in the snares of human weakness, or carried away by my own carnal
Rom. vii. 18. confidence. I felt that in me there dwelt no good thing.
Matt. iii. 12. I thought that in the day of his judgment much chaff will
Matt. xxii. 11. be found, when he passes his own people in review; wherefore I was greatly troubled, fearing lest, at his appearing, I should, through my daily miscarriages and my unholy walk, not stand in the judgment. Hence I frequently besought him with tears, that he, of his fatherly compassion, would make me a poor miserable creature meet in bonds and imprisonment to suffer for his name; and also to go to death for his sacred testimony. Then I should be certain of the salvation of my soul, and not think of
Rev. vi. 17. being brought to shame in the day of his wrath. To this
Acts v. 41. he, of his fatherly mercy, hath chosen me, and hath counted
Rev. vi. 9. me worthy to bear his blessed testimony in my bonds before
Matt. xii. 39. this wicked and adulterous generation. For this I greatly
Ecclus. xliii. 30. rejoice. It is the grief of my heart that I cannot sufficiently thank and praise our compassionate and gracious Father, for the unspeakably great benefits that he has bestowed, and is still daily bestowing, on me a miserable creature.

Therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, since I have a fatherly concern for you and love you with a divine love,
2 Pet. ii. 12. I cannot be negligent, seeing I remain yet a little in this tabernacle, to admonish you by my writing, praying you not to think that I exercise authority over you, but seek
Eph. iv. 13. with all kindness to build you up to the full stature of
2 Cor. iii. 3. Christ, that you may be found a true epistle of Christ,
2 Cor. i. 22. written not with ink or on paper, but by the Holy Spirit of the living God, by whom also you are sealed to the day of your redemption. He hath written God's precepts and laws in your hearts and minds, whereby you are now

become an epistle of Christ, seen and read of all men, who behold your holy chaste conversation in the humility of your hearts and low esteem of yourselves. 1 Pet. iii. 2.

Therefore, my beloved, I once more entreat you, although you are humble, humble yourselves yet more; John xv. 8. although you are clean, yet cleanse yourselves still more; Rev. xxii. 11. although you are become holy, yet sanctify yourselves more and more, that you may be pure and blameless Phil. ii. 15. children of God, in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. *Among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not laboured in vain.* For although I 2 Tim. iv. 6. am about to be offered, and the time of my departure is now at hand, yet I rejoice for your sakes and that of others, whom I have begotten in my bonds, who in time past were Philemon 11. unprofitable in the house of God, but are now useful. 2 John i. 2. Finally, my affectionate prayer is that you will heartily John xiii. 34. love each other out of a pure heart, as they that are born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, namely, 1 Pet. i. 23. of the living, powerful, and saving word of God. Remember the words of Paul, our brother, where he says, *The end of* 1 Tim. i. 5. *the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience;* yea, it is the bond of perfectness. Oh Rom. xiii. 8. how blessed is he who is well girded about with this bond. Col. iii. 14. He liveth not to himself but to his Lord, and in every Gal. ii. 21. thing observes the words of Christ. Be merciful even as Luke vi. 36. your heavenly Father is merciful. Therefore, my beloved, I beseech you by the mercies of our gracious Lord Jesus Rom. xii. 1. Christ, and also by the eternal salvation of your souls, that you be not forgetful of hospitality; *for it not only supplieth* [311] 2 Cor. ix. 12. *the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God. With such sacrifices God is well pleased.* Think of the wise man's words, *He that hath pity on the* Prov. xix. 17. *poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* Further he says, *He that giveth* Prov. xxviii. 27.

unto the poor, shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes, shall
Prov. x. 16. *have many a curse. The labour of the righteous tendeth to*
Prov. xi. 24. *life; the fruit of the wicked to sin. There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* Christ has rightly said,
John xii. 8. *The poor ye have always with you.* Wherefore he will say
Matt. xxv. 40. in the judgment-day, *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Hence it follows, my dearly beloved, that the words of
2 Cor. ix. 6. Paul will be true; viz. *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully; for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

My faithful friends, my fatherly prayer to you is, that you live in all peace, kindliness and unity together.
Rom. xv. 1. Let one help to bear, in love, another's burden. You know not how long you shall live together. Remember that you are called the children of peace. Your King and
Isa. ix. 6. Prince is a king and prince of peace. You must therefore be found to be the children of peace, as I am indeed persuaded you are, though I thus write.

I commend you to the great Shepherd of the sheep, who
Heb. xiii. 20. will, I trust, preserve you together beneath the shadow of
Psa. xvii. 8. his wings. Only abide by his precepts and laws, and turn
John x. 28. not away from his hand, and I am certain that none shall pluck you out of his hand. Once more I entreat you, and that by the wounds of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and
Isa. liii. 8. also for the everlasting salvation of your souls, that you will take to heart my faithful warnings given you now in the last days of my life. Let not my letter after my departure be neglected by you, nor esteem it as a lifeless history or fable. Receive it as a testament. Let it be to you a perpetual remembrance and memorial. By it remember me,
1 Tim. iv. 12. that according to my weakness I have been an example to
1 Pet. ii. 21. you. Let no one snatch you away from the place of conflict in which you now stand, nor make you irresolute; but

ever increase your diligence to make your calling and election sure. Oh! if you do this, my beloved ones, ye shall not fall; but so an entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. i 10.

As to my own state, and that of my fellow warriors, you will understand that it is rather to the furtherance of the gospel. You will also learn that the Lord faithfully stands by me in my conflict and defence, and hath enabled me to maintain the field, and hath delivered me from the jaws of hell and the lions' teeth. I think I have been ten or twelve times engaged with them; but the others they have not so harassed. In short, I hope the fight is fought, the course finished, and life preserved. Henceforth is laid up for me the crown of glory, which I hope shall by no creature be taken from me; for He is faithful who hath begun this good work in me, and who, undoubtedly, will help me complete it, and according to my resolution, without hurt, to pass over Jordan. God grant us his grace. Amen. [312] Phil. i. 12. Psa. lxvi. 12. 1 Cor. ii. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 18. 2 Tim. iv. 7. Rom. viii. 39. Phil. i. 6. Josh. iii. 10.

Communicate this amongst yourselves, and implore on it God's blessing. Meditate thereon diligently, understand it wisely.

Finished the 6th October, in the twenty-third month of my imprisonment.

Once more, my dear children, keep yourselves piously united together in the cross of Christ, and depart not therefrom. Matt. 24.

Another letter of Jelis Matthijs to his wife.

My heartily beloved wife and sister in the Lord, I wish you much strength and comfort from God, the Father of mercy, through the consolations of the Holy Ghost, by whom He comforts all afflicted anxious hearts, that are [314.

distressed on account of His testimony, as is your case at
Rev. i. 9. this present time. You are, indeed, somewhat heavily oppressed; although you are so far taught by the Holy Spirit, that you know well that it is the will of our Lord and Master, to whom we have bent the knee, to serve him and be faithful to him in all distress and tribulation. For to this end hath he chosen and called us both, that we should maintain his name amidst much tribulation and anguish; and should not be grieved at these few strokes,
Job v. 17. and fatherly chastisements. Thereby he makes us true inheritors of his heavenly kingdom, if we receive them in submission and patience, and be exercised therein. Hereto may the merciful gracious Father strengthen us by the might of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

Further, my dear wife, the beloved of my heart, forasmuch as I think it probable that you are anxious and cast down in spirit on my account, and would (as I easily imagine) be glad to hear and know how it is with me, I cannot refrain from writing to you a line, how it has been with us. But, indeed, I wrote you on our last night (as I thought), and asked the bailiff whether I might be permitted to write to my poor sorrowful wife. He said, Yes. However, I was not permitted to go up again, but remained in the kitchen. Huyge would not consent to my writing except he had it, and gave it to the bailiff himself, as I think he has done. But I hope that you will still get it.

My mind remains unalterable. I am prepared to await all that is laid upon me by God, our merciful and gracious Father, and by the enemies of the truth. We heard nothing of any troubles till the evening, about nine o'clock, when Hugge, with his wife, came up, saying, "Master Jelis and Willebort, come down; there is a person who wishes to speak with you." Our women, especially Maeyken, began to cry and weep. I asked him, if we should not return; to which he answered little.

I immediately took off my cassock and put on the old woollen one, and gave my child a kiss. Then taking off my cap, I spake a few words to God our merciful and kind Father, that he would keep it all the days of its life. My heart was a little sorrowful over it; but it did not last long. When I came below, the stadtholder stood there a short time. Afterwards the bailiff came and looked at me, saying, "Well, Master Jelis, the time is come;" or [315] some such words. I then stepped a little nearer to him. I was quite cheerful in mind, and spoke to him very friendly, saying, "Sir, I have known you eight or ten years, and regarded you as a reasonable man; how is it that you take us unawares? We have not heard a single word about it." He said, "Why there is time enough; it will not be yet; but make ready against five o'clock to-morrow." I then had some discourse with him, saying, "Ah! man, man! what a heavy burden you are bringing upon yourself. I heartily wish you were not a judge over us; not on our account, for in that respect we are in good spirits." I took a cup that stood there, and presented it to him. When he was gone, I began to write, and wrote until near five o'clock, when he came again, and said that the officers should conduct us. How it has gone off at the Townhall, you may have heard. Coming from thence we were both shut up in a room, and being in fetters, I could not write you. The next day, this very morning, the bailiff with the stadtholder again sent for us down. They brought us both into a cellar alone, which was very dark, the window having been stopped up, and said, "You must remain here, until there is a change." The stadtholder said, "We are all mortal, we know not our- Gen. iii. 19. selves when we shall die." I said nothing. As I stood in the cellar, the bailiff looked at me; I cast my eyes up towards heaven, and said, "O God, preserve us!" or some such words.

It seemed from the bailiff's manner as if he would say, "Aye, this is occasioned by you;" but he did not distinctly say so much, and went away with the others. Our
Cor. i. 4. God was not far from us with the comfort of his Holy Spirit. He filled my heart with joy; so that I was constrained to begin singing a hymn.

In the afternoon, we got a small piece of candle, and I began to write this; and would willingly have sent it you before night, but could not accomplish it; receive it therefore in love.

Oh! my dear and heartily beloved, I suspect that our hour is fast approaching. It is probable that the powers of this world will come to-night. I beseech you by the bleeding wounds of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal salvation of your soul, that you will never forget my departure before you; and if my child comes to years of understanding, and whom I hope you will bring up in the fear of God, that you will admonish him, and set my example before him. Let my blood be, to you, an abiding testament and memorial, that, according to my feeble powers, I have been an example. I could indeed wish that I had been able to walk before you more holily and unblameably; but you know, that according to my weak ability I have sought to please the Lord; and have, as my weakness would allow me, walked with courage in the path of the cross. This is my earnest desire also for you,
2 Pet. i. 10. and this path do not forsake. Give more diligence to make
Joel ii. 1. your holy calling and election more and more sure, for the
Psa. lxii. 12. day of the Lord is not afar off, in which he will render to every one according to his work. Then, my faithful love, he will discover the indolent, sluggish, and careless, who now bear the name of Christians, and carry indeed their
Matt. xxv. 3. lamps; but in which the oil of love and righteousness is gone out.

Ever pursue humility. A humbled heart can better try

and examine itself. It always bemoans its weakness and littleness before the Lord, fearful lest it should at last, in these perilous and terrible times, come to shame through the manifold artful snares and nets laid for it. On this account, such a regenerate child of God has an earnest desire to be at home, and to be delivered from this miserable defiled covering of clay, well knowing that he walks amidst great dangers. It rejoices him to hear of the cross of Christ; nor is he lightly disposed to flee before the ungodly, when the cause demands the endurance of affliction. But the sluggish, the idle, and the careless, who think continually that they are rich enough, and that they have need of nothing, as soon as they hear a rumour that the ungodly have entered into a compact to root out the righteous, are amazed or greatly affrighted. Sometimes this is not all; they come to their neighbour (whom they should inspire with courage), and cause him likewise to be alarmed.

Ecclus. iii. 18. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 2 Cor. v. 6. Phil. i. 23. Rev. iii. 17.

But you, my faithful love, be courageous, that I heartily beseech you; regard not those I have referred to, nor those who, at this time, so unfaithfully forsake the Lord, whether [316] on account of the cross, or persecution, or false doctrine. Oh! if they had previously examined themselves daily, and had had a taste for heavenly things, they would not so easily have permitted themselves to be deceived, or have been so fearful of the cross. They would have rejoiced to confess the name of their God in the midst of this wicked and perverse generation, and besought him that they might be strangers in the land, to the glory of their God and the edification of their neighbour.

My beloved, faithful, dear, and chosen wife, whom I love as my own soul; it is my prayer, that you will be solicitous all the days of your life to come where I, in a few hours or in a short time, shall be; that we may not be separated in the everlasting mansions of bliss. Oh!

that it might be the holy and acceptable will of God, and
Matt. x. 22. it were possible that I might drink the bitter cup for you! Yea, were it three times required, methinks I would willingly and heartily take it, that you thereby might be saved!

Then I should take my journey with a much more cheerful heart, and should have no reflections or fears that you would be moved away from the simplicity that is in our gracious Lord Jesus Christ; but there is no ground of apprehension so long as you remain where I now leave
Isa lxvi. 4. you, for you are afraid and tremble at the judgment that will be pronounced on the ungodly.

Concerning your daily infirmities and mistakes before God, these will not condemn or exclude you; the holy
John ii. 1. apostle John provides for these. He says: *If any man sin,*
Rom. viii. 34. *we have an advocate with the Father,* who intercedes for us, Christ Jesus, the High Priest who is there entered, namely,
Heb. ix. 12. into the holy of holies, and has offered an everlasting sacri-
Psa. cx. 1. fice, and made reconciliation for his people, and is set down
Col. iii. 1. at the right hand of God his Father, as an advocate and intercessor for our daily stumblings and errors; to this Intercessor and Advocate I direct you, not to departed saints, as the blind leaders of this world do; have recourse
Isa. lix. 1. to him in your greatest straits; think that his ear is not heavy that he will not hear you, and that his hand is not
Psa. xxxiv. 15. shortened that he is not able to help you. His eyes are upon the righteous, whom he hath so dearly purchased
1 Pet. i. 19. with his own precious blood, and to their cries, sighs, and
Matt. v. 4. tears he listens; he calls them blessed already that weep and suffer here for righteousness' sake, of whom you, at this time, are one; therefore, comfort yourself with these
Psa. cxxvi. 5. promises, they who here sow in tears shall come again and hereafter reap with abundant joy. Oh! think not, my beloved, that the tears you now shed shall be in vain, for they are already come before the face of God. Suffer yet

a little while, I beseech you; he will not, I hope, long leave you, but will take you away from calamity and bring you to sure rest in his chamber, as the prophet Esaias says; for you desire to walk, according to your weak ability, uprightly to the end, in which may our compassionate and tender Father aid you by the help and power of his Holy Spirit; he is faithful who, without doubt, will also do it. It is further my humble and affectionate desire that you heartily love your neighbour, and be ever mindful of the poor, holy family of God. Hitherto you have had a heart for this; let not your love herein cease, but much rather increase; be ever mindful of the words of Christ, where he saith: *Ye have the poor always with you.* Henceforth, I beseech you, my heartily beloved, that you always associate with the pious that you may increase in piety and meetness for heaven; be desirous of the sincere milk, namely, to hear God's word that you may grow thereby, and increase in every good work. Keep yourself in retirement (you know what I mean), I heartily beseech you, and wait for the day of your redemption; perhaps it is not far off.

Isa. xxvi. 20.

1 Thess. v. 24. Lev. xix. 18.

Tob. iv. 7.

Matt. xxvi. 11.

1 Pet. ii. 2.

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I now take my leave and an eternal adieu of you, my flesh and blood. Once more, humbly I beseech you, for the everlasting salvation of your soul, and by the great love which you have ever had for me, that you will after my departure keep in mind my communication and my hearty prayers and exhortations, whether by writing or by word of mouth. Let them not lie by you as a lifeless history or fable; but frequently use them as a recipe, serviceable to your health. Preserve it in the depository of your heart, as a perpetual treasure and memorial. It will afford you more profit and utility than many pieces of fine gold and silver.

The time approaches rapidly when I shall cease from writing and from all earthly things. Hence it is my most

hearty desire, and if you love me and the eternal salvation of your soul you will fulfil my desire, according to
Josh. i. 7. your weak ability, and turn neither to the right hand nor the left, whether on account of the cross, of bonds, or
Isa. li. 7. imprisonment, or aught else. And if God, our merciful and gracious Father, count you worthy to suffer for his name's sake, be not afraid. I had never thought that bonds and imprisonments could have had so little terror to one who has renounced himself, and has a hearty longing
Phil. i. 20. to be at home. Therefore, fear them not.

And now, my dear and heartily beloved wife and sister in the Lord, my time is expired. The days are passed.
2 Tim. iv. 7. The years are ended. I have fought a good fight; my
Psa. liii. 4 course is finished; I have kept the faith. My enemies are become ashamed that set themselves against me; for,
2 Tim. iv. 17. by my God, I have kept the field. He hath delivered me from the lion's jaws, and the mouth of hell; and will also deliver me from every evil, and save me at his coming; and divide to me the land of promise, which, by faith, I have seen, and have tasted of its fruits. Hence I have a hearty longing for it. Oh! help me to thank and praise our merciful and tender Father, that I have come through the wild wilderness of this deceitful, wicked, and perverse world, and am now standing on the brink of Jordan, through which I have yet to pass. Though it is somewhat fearful in appearance, yet I am wholly without fear; for I am sure that my God will stand by me, that I may pass through it uninjured and in safety. He is
Josh. i. 5. faithful that hath promised. He will not leave or forsake
Psa. lvi. 4. me; so that I may say, The Lord is with me, I fear not what man can do unto me. I am fetched.[n]

[n] [Van Braght has also preserved another letter of the martyr to his wife. The letters in the text have been slightly abridged.]

JAN GERRITS,

BURNED AT THE HAGUE FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, THE 15TH DECEMBER, ANNO 1564.

A Testament made by Jan Gerrits, a prisoner at the Hague, for the testimony of Jesus Christ, in December, anno 1564.

Grace and peace, from God our heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ, be with you. Amen.

My heartily beloved, and very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, I beg to inform you that I have received your letter, and have read it through with great joy. Your writing is, first, an encouragement to steadfastness in the faith, and to persevere unto the end, and that through Jesus Christ; to which end I am also with all my heart and mind, in the sight of our heavenly Father, desirous to come, and not I only, but all that fear God, according to his will. This indeed is my hope; for I have suffered stripes and torture, and that, according to John's words, for the brethren's sake. And I desire not 1 John iii. 16. that only, but also, if it be God's will, to die for his name, for his word and truth, whatever death it may be. I had not thought it would have continued so long; but since Luke xii. 7. not a hair of my head can be hurt without the permission of the Lord, I therefore desire to leave the issue patiently with him as becomes a Christian.

Hence, my very dear brethren and sisters, my hearty request to you and to all that fear God is, that you will pray the Lord for me, your weak brother, that I may receive the 1 Pet. i. 9. end of my faith; for the prayer of the righteous availeth much, and is powerful. Oh! they use every artifice to 2 Cor. iv. 7. rob me of the precious treasure; but I trust in the Lord that he will preserve me.

Secondly, dear brethren, it is great joy to me before

the Lord, that I learn that the vineyard of the Lord is increasing, and that his branches are spreading exceedingly, as I have long desired. I therefore now thank my God and yours that I hear this, as you have written me; and I rejoice that the light shines in every quarter and corner,
[318 and over every hill, as I hear from many friends that come to comfort me in my bonds. Hence, my dear friends, be diligent, each one according to the gift that he has received
Matt. xxv. 17. from God. Put it vigilantly out to usury, that you may
Matt. xxv. 23. gain much, and hear the word that the Lord saith, *Thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the marriage supper of the Lord.*

1 Pet. ii. 5. Let us then, each one, build up the house with lively stones, that an holy priesthood may be formed, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. We may always encourage ourselves in the Lord. His
1 Cor. xv. 57. power is so great towards them that fear him, that everything must yield to him; death, the devil, hell, fire, and sword. These cannot prevail against those that are built upon Christ; for we are mighty through him that makes
John iv. 18. us worthy, and through his love all are overcome. This love casteth out fear, as I may well assert; for when I was brought into the king's hall, and stood there nearly an hour before the magistrates came, and saw every thing prepared to torture me, I then thought repeatedly in myself, 'O Lord, unless thou now stand by my side, all is
Matt. x. 19. over with me;' and I prayed him to give me a mouth to speak to his praise and glory, and also to guard me from what might bring reproach on his holy name, and be injurious to my neighbour. As I thus spake, and they prepared to torture me, I lost all fear and mistrust. Severely and cruelly did they rack me, till the president said, "Why will you not tell the truth?"

Ans. "Because Christ answered nothing but what con-

cerned the honour of his Father, and his own divine character; in all other respects he was silent. I desire to do the same; but whatever concerns his honour and the doctrine he has commanded, I desire not to suppress before emperor or king, duke or count." Immediately the word was, "Seize him firmly. Do not spare him." Matt. x. 33.

Thus unmercifully, my dear brethren and sisters, they treated me. Nevertheless the Lord was indeed with me, praised be his name. I was not myself; but the Lord kept my lips, so that they could not obtain what they wished. Behold, my dear friends, how faithful the Lord is. They who hope in him, he will not suffer to be put to shame. Matt. x 19 Ecclus. ii. 12.

Thirdly, I inform you that my wife has been with me here, and brought me your friendly salutations, which it was very delightful to me to hear; and likewise that she is desirous of pursuing the best things, according to her weak ability; for she acknowledges that the life that she has hitherto led is bad, as we all may well acknowledge that in past times we were unprofitable. My prayer to you my dear brethren, is, that you will watch over her, and admonish her to live a better life, and that in love. And if it come to pass that you are somewhat successful, and write me thereof, it will be great joy to me. If you write to me before I present my offering to God, forward it to my aged mother, or to N., and I shall duly receive it. I have, in addition, sent them some spices, namely, a nutmeg, three or four races of ginger, and some cloves, that they may give them to J. C. or some others, to be cut in pieces, and duly divided for a perpetual memorial, and that in the Lord, of an eternal adieu in Christ to the things of earth, and a peaceful departure—if after this, there be no further communication, before we meet together with Christ, and see each other there in his glory. Amen. Titus iii. 3 Mark vi 1

My dearly beloved brethren, I have lived with you, and

am rejoiced that you are so valiant in building the city and temple of Jerusalem, which has for so many years been decayed and in ruins. Be not discouraged, brethren, although you may be mocked and derided, like Israel.
Neh. iv. 1. For observe, when they builded again the wall, they were stronger and more powerful in labour, notwithstanding the enemies were more wrathful to stay the progress of the work. They did not abandon it, but kept watch so much the more diligently, with the spear or sword in one hand, and in the other the trowel. They were of good courage, for God was with them, and fought for them. My friends, let us take example from these pious champions, who were not terrified at their enemies. Let us do in like manner; however they may exclaim, or write, yea, ridicule and say, 'See these people come and wish to lay
John vii. 15. a new foundation to the city, and know not *a* from *b*; whence do they get it? Where have they learned it? We have studied at universities, and spent our money to obtain it; should these asses come then and teach us? One forsooth is a cobbler, another a weaver or furrier; and these will quote the scripture! Let them mind their business; *that* belongs to us; we will not suffer it; fire, water, and sword must be employed against them.' Never-
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Matt. x. 28. theless, let us not fear, nor be affrighted; however the dogs may bark, the lions roar, God who is with us is a God of might. He will keep his own, and help them keep the field. They neither can nor may do otherwise than the Lord permits them. My dear brethren, receive with kindness this my simple writing; the greatest part has been written in haste, the day after I received your letter.
Heb. xiii. 3. Once more I commend you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace.

Send word to the friends in Vlieland that I greet them heartily with the peace of the Lord; that they may strive piously for the law of the Lord. Pray to the Lord for

me; I desire to remember you in return. Forget me not in your prayers; think as if you were likewise prisoners. Farewell. The fear of the Lord preserve you all. Amen.

With this I send you another letter, if it may enliven you a little in your contention with the adversaries of baptism, in which I have been engaged with a Lutheran priest. The following is my answer to the writing, which he sent to me, we having many times spoken with each other. The Lord be with your spirit. Amen.

A Letter from Jan Gerrits to the Lutheran priest.

My very dear good friend, with this I wish you farewell; for I hope, after this, to dispute or write neither with you nor with any other person. Paul says, Avoid contentions and profane babblings, and useless disputations; for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker. Therefore I desire to be released, and my soul to be at rest with God. Titus iii. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 17

My good friend, these are my arms, and the weapons of my faith, and that partly and briefly exhibited; with these, and no other, neither with iron nor steel, spear nor sword, will I storm the kingdom of antichrist; for spirit must be conquered by spirit, but the flesh with carnal weapons. Therefore, I say with the apostle, *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God* to cast down every thing that exalteth itself against the truth; *for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world; against spiritual wickedness in high places.* Therefore, all Christians must put on the armour of God, that they may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and having done all to stand. Therefore, Peter likewise says: *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh* 2 Cor. x. 4. Eph. vi. 12. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Pet. v. 8.

about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith; that is our armour, and with it we are satisfied.

Matt. x. 21. First: a Christian knows nothing of war; whatever comes upon him he must patiently bear for the Lord's sake. Christ
Matt. v. 44 has taught his people no otherwise than to love their enemies; besides, he forbade his disciples when they asked him,
Luke ix. 54. Wilt thou that *we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?* No, said he; do ye not know of whose spirit ye are the children? be merciful as your heavenly
1 Pet. ii. 23. Father is merciful. He threatened not when he suffered. These examples we follow, with all diligence, according to our weak ability, and thus commit our souls unto God in his mercy as to a faithful Creator; hence you may understand what kind of people we are, and what spirit we have.

Eph. vi. 14. With these my weapons, my good friend, I will oppose
1 Sam. xvii. 10. you, as the little and despised David met the presumptuous champion, great Goliath, who contemned and reproached the army of God and trusted in his own power; just as you, confident in your learning, in the title of Rabbi, and in the high estimate you form of your understanding,
1 Sam. xvii. 43. power, and strength, begin also with Goliath to say: Am I a dog that thou comest to me with a staff? I can and will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air to eat. That Goliath said, and you no less; for being powerless (you say) I am deceived and dead. Yes, my friend, I know well that I, and the like of me, are always esteemed by you to be little and unlearned.

By your presumption you have brought it to this point, that I dare come forth, with my sling and stone, and say to you with confidence as to Goliath, the champion and defender of the Philistines: 'Behold, thou art come out to me, trusting in thy spear and shield; but I come to thee in the name of the God of Israel, trusting in God, and will

this day give thy flesh to the fowls of heaven to eat, and will slay thee with thine own sword; to wit, with your own words, or disputation, which serves me to conquer you; not in the spirit of the universities, but by God's word and might, and that in Dutch, my mother tongue, to the praise of God and to your shame. The dumb beast of burden shall make your folly evident; so long have you, Balaam, smitten me, poor ass, until I speak by the power of God. So long have you, Goliath, despised and defied me and the army of Israel, until I have slain you with your own sword. This I should not have done had you not bitten with such sharp teeth, and set your pen so high. How could I suffer that? If by this you feel hurt, as I suspect you will, you must blame yourself, for one who must speak the words of God cannot be silent.

Eph. vi. 17.

Num. xxii. 27.

1 Sam. xvii. 10.

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Oh! my masters, it were well for you to be of Gamaliel's judgment, to let the people of God alone; if the work be of men it will come to nought; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it. It behoves you to see to it that you do not rush upon the sword of the Lord, and be not found as those that fight against God; persecute no longer Jesus of Nazareth, and leave Israel undisturbed.

Acts v. 35.

Acts ix.

But to come to the letter which you have sent me, that we may understand the reasons and nature of your faith. I find, then, that you greet me in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. To which I answer: Since you boast of being a Christian, and esteem me as an outcast and unbeliever, also that I hold a false opinion, I therefore say that you do not write with truth; for John says: *If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.* Paul also says: If any man that is called a brother be nevertheless a fornicator, or such like, and also an unbeliever, such shall not inherit the kingdom of God; there-

2 John 10.

1 Cor. v. 11.

fore, because they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, men shall not eat bread with them, to the destruction of their flesh, that they may reflect from whence they are fallen.

Secondly: you call me brother. On what grounds am I your brother, since we differ in faith? is it because we are
Gen. ii. 7. all created by one Father? I reply, no; for, that we may be brethren after the Spirit, and according to the doctrine of Christ and of the apostles, we must be of one faith, one practice, be led by one spirit, which now are very different.
John iii. 3. Brotherhood must come from the new heavenly birth,
Gal. iii. 9. from that which is earthly to what is heavenly, by the hearing of the divine word. This brotherhood is not said to belong to the unbelieving, nor does it come by fleshly descent. This Paul clearly distinguishes where he says,
2 Cor. vi. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness*, light with darkness, and Christ with Belial, the believing with infidels, or the temple of God with the temple of idols, &c.?
Eph. iv. 4. For brotherhood consists herein: to be diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit, to abide in one hope of your calling, to have one Lord, one faith, one baptism; but only observe your baptism, whether by a midwife or with confirmation, and with such you are satisfied, and you do not think that God will by his word have a place above all and in us all.

Since you and I are so opposite in faith, doctrine, life, and spirit, why then, I ask once more, do you call me brother? or, if I am a heretic, a wanderer from the truth,
Titus iii. 10. why do you not shun me, as we are once or twice exhorted to do, for that is a command of the scripture? but (alas) you
2 Pet. ii. 1. are not obedient to the writings that are inspired by God, but you choose those that lead to destruction.

Thirdly: I find by your deceitful letter of instruction that I am accused and exclaimed against as being in error, and in a state of misapprehension, only concerning baptism, without any other articles. What shall I say to this? Are

then all your idols an abomination to you? have you renounced your false doctrine and the practice of your churches? I think not; that deceitful gain is too agreeable to you; but I understand your meaning well, that when you had plundered me of the one you think to get the other, according to your own remark in Delft. Oh! what a brother you are! but my Teacher and Master, Christ Jesus, has warned me of you; to be wise as the serpent, but harmless as the dove. Yes, you are such a brother to me as the old lying prophet who deceived the man of God by his lies; for God had commanded the man of God to prophesy against the altar, and to eat no bread nor drink water in that place until thou (said he) return to thy own land; but the seed of the serpent, the old prophet, said: "Eat bread with me and drink water." The man of God answered: "God hath forbidden me." But the deceiver said: "I am also a prophet of the Lord as thou art, and the Lord spake to me that thou shouldest eat bread here and drink water;" then the man of God went in with him and broke the commandment of the Lord. Therefore was he slain by a lion in the way as a punishment for his disobedience.

Matt. x. 16.

1 Kings xiii. 18.

My soul trembles exceedingly at that example; for after such deception and transgression of my Lord's word he would send the lions, dragons, and bears to have dominion over my soul and slay it. Were my faith infirm and to waver, I should certainly be a conquered and dead man; but the anchor of my faith abides steadfast.

Fourthly: I notice your ignorant or wilful stupidity in supporting your infant baptism by the circumcision of the law, or by the sign of the covenant of Israel; for the circumcision which you understand to be by baptism, Paul asserts to be made without hands, in the Spirit, in putting off the sins of the flesh, whose praise is not of men, as it was helpful to Israel, but of God. Is, then, your infant baptism in the Spirit, without hands, and in putting off the

Col. ii. 11.

Rom. ii. 29.

sins of the flesh, and sins, too, which they have not yet committed? for to put off that which is sinful, is this (says
Col. iii. 5. Paul): *Mortify your earthly members; as, fornication, adul-*
[321] *tery, uncleanness, inordinate affection.* Observe whether this can be understood of your children?

On account of your baptism of infants you cause us to be called Anabaptists, though we baptize once, not twice, nor allow baptism more than once, and that according to the truth, and agreeably to the command and practice of
Acts viii. 12. the apostles. With this we are well content.

Fifthly. You shall hear our confession and practice. Our baptism is not an opinion, but a submission to the command of Almighty God. After which I hope, as I said before, neither to write nor dispute with you or any other. Bold valour and great parts I do not possess, but a settled judgment and firm conviction of the ground of my faith.
Gen. xvii. 9. Take then a short answer. Respecting circumcision, I acknowledge that it was a sign of the covenant of Abraham, to him and all his seed, and also an entrance of Israel into the church of God. The external Israelitish circumcision was a type of the future inward circumcision of Christ, as may clearly be understood from the spirit of
Rom. ii. 28. the New Testament. Paul remarks: That is not circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but circumcision is that of the heart, that is, the circumcision which is in the Spirit, and not in the letter, nor of the law; whose praise
Col. ii 11. is not of men, but of God. Again: In whom also ye are circumcised, by the circumcision of Christ made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh. What kind of people then are they who are buried with him in baptism? Mark the words, *Ye are risen again;* through what? Through faith. What faith? What faith have the godfathers and godmothers, through which God can work according to your understanding? Observe carefully here; not children, but persons of faith and understanding.

And this is your strongest proof! Oh, friend, do not kick wilfully against the pricks; it will be hard for you to speak with God, if you thus audaciously trifle with his word and truth. Will you still hold to the external circumcision, and make it typical of baptism? Well, then, what makes your baptizers of infants so bold, that you baptize them before the eighth day? and why do you baptize the females? for in the law these were not circumcised, and hence it must follow that females should remain unbaptized; for truth is consistent. Acts iv. 5. Gen. xvii. 10.

We have now done with your types of baptism; but we are better instructed as to these figures of baptism. To this Paul and Peter will help us by their testimony. The entering into Noah's ark (says Peter) represents baptism to us. Who dare deny this? The man that will also speak against us, who are in his estimation insignificant and unlearned, and yet are taught of God. Gen. vii. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Matt. xi. 25.

Our second witness on this subject is the great apostle Paul, who proclaimed the whole counsel of God. The departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and their passage through the Red Sea, and their baptism under the pillar of the cloud unto Moses, was a figure, and for our learning. But we who are of the Spirit and adhere to the New Testament, acknowledge a plain ordinance, instruction, and command of God, according to the rule, practice, and clear examples of baptism, given us by the apostles. To us that is evidence enough. Acts xx. 27. Exod. xiv. 22. 1 Cor x. 6. Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts ii. 38.

The command of Christ is this: *Go ye into all the world; preach the gospel to every creature; teach them to observe what I have commanded you, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.* First, there is the grave of sin; an entrance into the church of God; a putting on of Christ; a fleeing from the wrath of God; a washing of regenera- Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15. Rom. vi. 4. Gal. iii. 27. Titus iii. 5.

tion; and a seal of a good conscience, or assurance before
Luke vii. 30. God. He that rejects this, rejects the counsel of God.
Acts viii. 36. This was the practice of the apostles. *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*, was first asked by them.
This that follows is likewise Jan Gerrits' own work, though not printed in the first books. If this is asked the brethren, and they say, Yes; it is well. For the apostles baptized on a profession of faith, and not otherwise. For had the chamberlain (or eunuch) said, 'I cannot believe,' Philip had not baptized him. But he
Acts viii. 35. said, *I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God*. This and no other is my belief. Again; when the multitude at Jerusalem heard the address of Peter, they were cast down, and asked, What shall we do? Take good advice. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; and they that gladly received the word, were baptized." Do your children do so? Then you are on that old foundation; for there can be no other foundation laid than is laid, which is Christ Jesus, his word and
Acts xvi. 34. example. The jailor rejoiced with his whole house that he had believed. Are your children also believers? then
[322] it is well. Peter proclaimed it in the house of Cornelius, the centurion of the Italian band, and the Holy Ghost fell as well on the Gentiles as on the Jews. Were there likewise children on whom the Holy Ghost fell? And this is the question I asked you before we parted, when the servant came to lay the cloth, and you mentioned that passage, *that which is born of the flesh is flesh*, and that with reference to infant baptism. I then asked you, where the Spirit remained? but you gave me no answer.
John iii. 8. For John says, *The wind bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest indeed the sound thereof, but thou knowest not whence it cometh*. Do children then feel the Holy Spirit? Nicodemus was a carnal man, and savoured not the things of the Spirit of God; therefore Christ directed his attention
Matt. xviii. 3. to a child, as is related in Matthew the eighteenth. He

must be born again of water, that is, from the flesh into the Spirit, as Christ himself hath said, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Except *a man,* what is that else than one that is carnally minded, as Nicodemus was; for *to be carnally minded is death.* No children are such; for they are insensible of it. But *to be spiritually minded is life and peace,* as Paul justly witnesses. And to the Galatians he says, *If ye be led of* Gal. v. 18. *the Spirit, ye are not under the law; for the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these: adultery, unchastity, uncleanness, voluptuousness, idolatry, witchcraft, enmity, variance, envy, wrath, strife, heresies, hatred, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, humbleness, temperance; against such there is no law.* Peter also says, *Wherefore lay off all malice, and all guile,* 1 Pet. ii. 1. *hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking; as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* In like manner do you divest yourself of the loftiness and presumption of your heart. Be built up as a lively stone in the house of God, an holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices pleasing to God through Jesus Christ. These sacrifices are works of righteousness, and not the inventions of men, the ingenious institutions of an outward sacrifice. Having this conscience we proceed on our way. With the certainty of this we are satisfied, and are ready for Christ's sake to forsake life and property, which you will not do. In short, we do not seal the epistle of Christ before he has written it. We do not sow before the ground has been well ploughed by God and his word. We do not set sail before we have fair weather and a favourable wind. You take the child from the mother before her time. But we wait till the time is fulfilled in which the child shall be born. Who can be silent when

such things as these are seen? Thus it is that we declare the baptism of scripture to be a command of God, and the sure clear practice of the apostles. Moreover, we diligently inquire into the design of baptism, why it is ordained, what are its benefits, to whom it belongs, and what is its scriptural designation. In the first place, it is the grave of sin; an entrance into the fellowship or church of God; a putting on of Christ; a flight from the wrath to come; the washing of regeneration; and the seal of a good conscience towards God. He who forsakes or repudiates this, forsakes and repudiates the counsel and word of God.

Rom. vi. 4. Col. iii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal iii. 27. Matt iii. 7. Titus iii 5. Luke vii. 30.

In the sixth place, I answered you, even if I addressed you rudely. My Lord and Master, I say, has not otherwise taught me. He says, *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly*, that is, in their hearts, *they are ravening wolves*. You came to me with fair words in order to destroy my soul, as you boasted that you would do. Why then should I not speak or write the truth? For it was you who sought to devour or to tear me to pieces—me, a poor sheep, to allure from the pasture of Christ. No, no; may God, the chief shepherd, preserve me. No man shall pluck me from his hand. But he who forsakes him may have another answer. Diligently have you sought to wound my soul, and yet you call me brother. Therefore I call you a wolf in sheep's clothing; but, repent and become a lamb. Alas! friend, wherefore have you come?

Matt. vii. 15.

In the seventh place, you strewed at my feet sweet roses and feathers, and made the bank smooth to ensnare me, saying, Do not mind what they say who destitute of the scriptures have deceived you, and yet look, is this without scriptural authority? As if I relied on men's fine talk. No, no; had my faith depended on men's fine words, you had easily ensnared me, facts bear witness.

But, my good friend, I think you have here enough to know my faith. I beseech you not to condemn little children because of Adam's transgression, lest you be condemned. For Christ has redeemed us by his death from its consequences, as was said to you when in conference with you. For Paul says, *As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.* John saith, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.* In the epistle to the Galatians it is written, *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law;* and in the Ephesians, that he hath taken away the enmity by his cross. He hath also promised them his kingdom, saying, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.* And he took them in his arms, blessed them, laid his hands upon them, and said, *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.* For when he says, *of such,* there is no difference, as Paul says, that the Jew and Greek are all under sin. But you separate them, and say, that this was spoken only of Jewish children, as if there were none other than Jewish children. I replied, that you should show me this from the words of the evangelist; but you could not, and you gave me no answer. For Christ displayed his miracles to heathen as well as to Jewish children; as in the case of the Gentile woman and the centurion's servant, of whom he bare testimony, that he had not in all Israel found such faith. Many such examples are given.

[323] Rev. v. 18. John i. 29 Gal. iii. 13. Eph. ii. 16. Mark x 14. Luke xviii. 15. Matt. xix. 14. Luke xviii. 17.

Lastly, I entreat you to receive kindly my plain writing, for it is the work of a peasant. If God had blessed me with higher endowments I had done better. But I praise him for that which he has bestowed. Farewell.

I, Jan Gerrits, smith, of Tessel, confess but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Spirit, one Father of all, who Eph. iv. 5

Rev. iii. 11. is above all, and through all, and in us all. *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take* Rev. xxii. 20. *thy crown. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

Another letter written to his friends by Jan Gerrits.

I greet you, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord. I now send you that which you desired, so far as in me lies, according to my poor ability. I give hearty thanksgiving to God the Father, and to his beloved Son Jesus Christ, Deut. xxxi. 6. that he hath not forsaken me, but hath at all times helped 2 Cor. iv. 16. me to keep the field. For he ever looketh in his mercy on his people, and his ears are ever open to their cry. For Psa. xxxiv. 15. it is written, When thou passest through the waters or the Isa. xliii. 2. fire, I will be with thee. Therefore, I give to him all praise and honour for his aid, which he hath shown to me, a poor sinner, in my tribulations, sufferings, and pain. Yes, dear brethren, He protected me, that the dogs, the Psa. lxi. 3. lions, and the bears could not molest me, however frightful their howlings around me. The Lord was my preserver. My confidence and hope is in Him, that he will Rom. viii. 41. ever in His great mercy, keep me to the end. If God be Psa. xlvi. 7. with us, who then shall harm us? If the Lord keep the house, as David says, who can injure it?

My dear friends, if I were able to express the feelings I experienced when I was suspended, and received sore scourging, for the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, I would do so; for His word and bitter sufferings, which He endured for us poor sinners, so filled my mind that I could think of nothing else. See, dear brethren and sisters, how the Lord can keep and defend those who trust Zech. ii. 8. in Him, even as the apple of His eye.

But let it please you to know, that at first they proposed several questions to me; what was my name? where I

was born? my age? and how long I had lived at Tessel? Next they inquired, When I received baptism?

Ans. "Five years ago."

Qu. "In what place?"

Ans. "I wish not to say." They said "We will compel you to tell us." They pointed to the executioner, and added, "When you are asked for the truth, you ought always to tell the truth."

Ans. "Any question touching my faith I am ready to answer; but on no other subject has God commanded me to speak." They next inquired if my wife was of the same faith.

Ans. "No; which is a grief to me." Again they inquired who had baptized me?"

Ans. "I wish not to say."

Qu. "Was it N ——?"

Ans. "God has not commanded me to tell; and if I were to tell you, he does not reside in the king's country."

Qu. "When Christ stood before the rulers he gave answers to the questions proposed to him; why do you not do the same?"

Ans. "When he was questioned concerning the honour of his Father and of his own Deity, he answered them; on all other matters he was silent. And every question concerning his law, his commands, his precepts, I am willing to answer before kings, dukes, counts, princes, and other nobles, and will not keep silence." In a few words, the judge immediately said to the executioner, "Seize him." I fell prostrate and prayed to God for his aid. He then said to the assistants, "Lift him up." Then they fell upon me, and treated me as the Lord our Master was treated. They stripped me of my clothes, bound my hands behind my back, and without mercy hoodwinked and suspended me. They then beat me, as if I had been a tree, till the rods snapt like hemp-stalks, and said, "Speak; does a

Matt. x. 32.

Matt. xxvii. 28.

[324]

dumb devil possess you? we will soon drive him out." But the Lord, blessed be His name, shut my mouth. Not even once did a cry escape me. For the sorrows of the Lord, as it is written, and his testimony, so filled my heart that I could not speak.

At last, when they saw that I was sinking under the torture they said, "Let him down, the dumb devil can then speak better." As they let me down my head fell against some boards; but again seizing me they placed me on a bench, where I should have again fainted had they not supported me. They stood around me like bears and lions. "I must answer their questions," they said. But the Lord was my helper and my strength, to him be the praise for his great mercy; nothing passed my lips. The president then said, "Have you no rougher rods to drive out this dumb devil?" The executioner said, "No; but I have a cord here." They were about to cover my eyes again, when he said "Let him see:" and as he smote me, I thought, "O Lord, Thou seest it," and closed my eyes. Yes, my friends, had they laid on as long as they could draw a breath, I do not think they would have succeeded, for the strength of the Most High was with me. When they saw it was all in vain, they brought a hundred pound weight and hung it to my feet. Then my heart went forth to God, "Keep, oh! keep, my treasure." In short, all their endeavours were fruitless. They then inquired if I understood Latin? I answered, I did tolerably well.

Qu. "Do you understand Italian?"

Ans. "No."

Qu. "Where did you go to school?"

Ans. "At Delft."

Qu. "At what time?"

Ans. "When Delft was burnt."[o] They inquired if I

[o] [This took place in the year 1536, on the 3rd May. Upwards of nine thousand houses were burnt, in which many sick and infirm

had read the books of Menno or D. P.? I replied that I had; but that one Boshuysen had taken away my doctrinal books, namely, The New Creature, by Menno,[p] and the Spiritual Restitution, by D. P.[q] They asked me how I had come by them? But my mouth was shut. The cry then was, "Fetch water and candles, the dumb devil must be driven out." But the Lord was my keeper; for which I can never sufficiently thank him. Finally they said, "Release him; give him a brief respite; we shall then get on better with him." As they left me, I said that they should be careful in what they did, for the day of the Lord will surely overtake them; thus they departed from me.[r]

Eccles. xliii 44.

Isa. xiii. 6.

Dear brethren and sisters, I send you my last adieu, in the fear of Christ. I should have written somewhat more; but time will not permit. If it please the Lord, I desire to stand at the stake with him. The Lord be with you all. Amen.[s]

John xiv. 27

2 Thess iii. 18.

CONRAD KOCH, 1565.

When, in these last days, the gospel began again to shine, and the truth to spread abroad, not only along the borders of the Rhine, but also in the duchy of Berg,

persons, besides children, lost their lives. Twisck Chronijk, fol. 1078, deel. ii.]

[p] [Een schoone ende grondelyke Lecringe uyt des Heeren Woord; van de Nieuwe Geboorte, 1556. Opera Omnia, fol. 123.]

[q] [De Geestelyke Restitution; dat is, hoe dat al, wat den beginnen geschied is, in Christus Jesus geestelyk vervuld, wederherhaald, en wedergebragt is, &c. By Dirk Phillips. Maatschoen's Schyn; deel. ii. 363.]

[r] [Het Offer des Heeren, fol. 188.]

[s] [The MS. Cronickel places under this year the martyrdom of Julius Klampherer, at Venice. See p. 306, ante. In this year the baptists of Zurich and Berne were exposed to severe trials and persecutions for their faith. Ottius Annal. Anab. p. 141. Ruchat, Hist. Ref. vii. 84–86.]

Conrad Koch was enlightened in the knowledge of God. He then sought by divine assistance to leave the darkness,
Eph. iv. 18. and to walk in the clear bright light of the gospel. He renounced popery, and a worldly, ungodly life. He joined
Mark i. 15. the church of the Lord, heard God's word and received it in his heart. He believed the gospel, and on confession of his sins and of his faith in Christ Jesus, was baptized
[325] according to the command of Christ. Following his example, he conducted himself in a brotherly and Christian manner in the church; and, according to his ability,
Rom. xiii. 13. honourably before all men. But since those who walk in darkness cannot bear the light, this man was hated by the Papists, and complaint was made to the collector, who was the judge and ruler for the prince of Julich.[t] This man sent his servants to Hoff, where Conrad dwelt, to arrest him and convey him to prison. For this he was prepared.
Acts xii. 5. As a lamb, he willingly went with them to Lowenberg. Lowenberg is one of seven castles, which, on account of their height, are seen from a great distance. He was then cast into a tower, and shut up in a miserable dungeon. In this condition he remained about half a year, but enjoyed the consolations of the Lord, although he had to suffer great hunger.

The collector boasted and threatened many times that his life should be taken away, if he would not forsake his faith. They sorely tempted him with entreaties, then with hunger, then with threats that he must die; but he remained unmoved. His heart was fixed.

1 Pet. iii. 15. As he had without fear confessed his faith, and no
Matt. x. 28. tortures could affright him, the time at length came that he must depart from this world and die for the truth. They released him from his fetters, and he walked of his own accord from the tower at Lowenberg to the town of

[t] [Now forming part of the Prussian province of the Rhine.]

Hoff. A Barabbas was his guide. It was a malefactor who went with him. They came to Hoff secretly, which is but a short distance from Lowenberg. As Barabbas was released when Christ was crucified, so it happened in this case. Conrad was brought to the Town-hall at Hoff. It was represented to him, that if he would recant, his life should be spared, and they would set him at liberty. Matt xxvii. 26.

Manifold were the devices and falsehoods employed to lead him astray. The sophists sent forth bitter and sweet, saying, "Go, but for one year, to church, and if the pure truth be not preached, then stay away." One of these dissemblers said to Conrad, "My dear Conrad, though we be false, wicked, and deceitful, that cannot be hurtful to your soul; fear you God, and live peaceably with all men. What does it matter to you if our faith is weak?" Conrad said to the magistrates, "Ye servants of God, ye ought to know that God accepts no hypocrite. An example of this we may see in old Eleazar, who laid down his life rather than be guilty of hypocrisy. In like manner I prefer to die, rather than be present in your assemblies." Conrad said yet farther, "Christ is the head of the church; he that would please Him must manifest himself to be a member of his body. Nor must he separate himself from Christ the Head. To him I desire to cleave, though it cost me my life." They then asked Conrad what he thought of infant baptism. He said, "I cannot but regard it as the chiefest abomination of the pope. But if you can prove it to me by the word of God, my mind is open to instruction. Alas, O God!" said Conrad, "let my complaint come before thee. What a necessity is this, that they who speak thy truth should suffer death. Of no crime can they accuse me; nevertheless in their enmity they seek to take away my life. O Lord, forgive them!" Jame iii. 11. Eccles. xii. 11. Rom. xii. 18. Rom. xiii. 1. 2 Macc. vi. 24. Eph. v. 23. Luke xxiii. 34

The proclamation of the prince of Julich,[u] was then read to him, after which the judges passed sentence, whereat the collector broke his rod. The sentence was, that Conrad should be put to death if he would not recant. Having been thus twice sentenced, they brought him to the place of execution. As he drew near, he began to sing, "O God! how tenderly doest thou chastise me! Extend to me thy gentle hand, that in my weakness I may avoid all occasion of sin and blasphemy, that the old man may be destroyed, and that I may have everlasting joy with thee! I give thee praise, O Christ, Thou who art the highest God, that I have lived to see this day and
Acts xxii. 20. hour, in which to witness thy name with my blood. Dear brethren and sisters, I commend you all to the Lord, hold fast in your hearts the gospel of Christ. This is the lesson
Rev. xiv. 7. that I leave you; fear God; be pious; be followers of me even as I have cheerfully followed Christ the Lord,
Luke xiv. 26. and am ready to lay down my life for him." Thus was this pious man secretly put to death with the sword, so that it was not known to many. Thieves, and murderers, they are wont publicly to execute, but the godly they massacre in secret, a reproach to those who judge them.
1 Pet. v. 1. So Conrad, like a faithful witness of the sufferings of Christ, was privately beheaded, standing upright, in the year 1565, at Hoff, in the duchy of Berg, a place belonging to the prince of Julich and Cleves. By the same collector, who was a blood-thirsty man, seven other persons were

[u] [A most severe edict was issued by the Duke John on the 12th December, 1534, threatening all anabaptists and sacramentaries with banishment and death. Duke William somewhat mitigated in 1565 the severity of this edict, and directed that every effort should be made by the clergy to recover the sectaries to the true faith. From the pains taken to break up the meetings of the sufferers, and the directions to sequester their meeting-houses and property, it would appear that the baptists were in considerable numbers in the district. Goebel's Gesch. des Christ. Lebens. i. 211—213.]

imprisoned, four brethren and three sisters. These four brethren were also sentenced to death, if they would not renounce their faith. But the Lord protected them, and [326] delivered them all from prison. The sanguinary collector was smitten of God with an unexpected death, so that the prisoners, steadfast in the faith, obtained their liberty.

The two following letters were written by Conrad Koch, while in prison.

The first Letter:—

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, I, Conrad Koch, a prisoner of the Lord at Lowenberg, wish to my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord. Amen. Rom. i. 7.

I hereby inform you that the executioner has been with me. They have sorely tempted me with their words, but they have not yet put me to the rack. The Lord preserved me, so that I did not gratify their wish. They then said, that they would go to eat, then return and put me to the torture. While they were gone, the collector came, and urged me to permit the prince's preacher again to visit me, who, he said, was well acquainted with the errors which we held. I replied, "I do not desire to see him; the word of the Lord is my teacher. I have before told you that I desire no priest." He replied, "That is true, but nevertheless, it is my earnest wish that you should consent, and say you desire him to come. Although you should not agree in opinion, it would be right to do this, if only to be free from men." I said, "I wish not to lay down the cross of Christ." He replied, "Then I cannot avert it," and went his way. Gal. vi. 14.

In this manner, my dear brethren and sisters, has the

Acts xii. 5. Lord preserved me; nevertheless pray the Lord for me,
Eph. vi. 18. that He would keep me by his faithful word unto the end of life, and that I may cleave thereto. For I have a good hope, and am willing, with all patience, by the help of the Lord, to await whatsoever the Lord shall suffer to befall me for his name's sake. God grant that my temptations may not be greater than I can bear, that through me his
Eph. vi. 19. name may not be blasphemed. Therefore, pray the Lord for me. I trust also, never to forget my dear brethren
1 John v. 14. and sisters, nor any who fear the Lord. May the Lord help us to pray according to his will, that our prayers may be heard with those of all the righteous. The Lord grant us this, through His mercy. Amen.

It has come to my ears that our fellow sufferers at Cologne have escaped from prison, the Lord be praised for his unspeakable love which he has shown to us in these last days, preserving us from those false serpents who approach us with smooth words and hollow-hearted hypocrisy, that they may tempt us to break the covenant of the Lord. But the Lord will keep all those who have received his covenant. Amen. I commend you to the Lord.

The second letter written to his brother A. van B.

Rom. i. 7. Grace, peace, and unshaken confidence in the Lord, I wish you, my dear brother in the Lord. I thank the Lord for the letter, which you wrote me, and I desire also my dear brother, that you will aid me with your prayers to God; that I may
Acts v. 42. be counted worthy to endure that very thing which you have wished for me, and which I so earnestly long for. I have a good hope, and God be praised, I am willing to suffer for his name. The Lord grant me strength. Amen. I desire also of you, my dear brother, that you will present many good wishes to my brother H. R. on my behalf.

May the Lord count us worthy of every good thing, but I am not able to write so much as I would. May the Lord in his great mercy grant to us whatever may contribute to our salvation. Amen. I also desire that you will present to all my brothers and sisters my good wishes, and exhort them to pray the Lord that he would uphold me by his faithful word even unto death. I trust never to forget you. If we pray with sincerity and with love, the Lord will hear and help us, and hereafter permit us to enter with the righteous into his kingdom. May the Lord be our helper. Amen. On the eve of All Saints two priests visited me and would have taken me to church, but as I showed myself unwilling to go, they produced an order from the magistrates, as the three judges. But it was all in vain. The Lord preserved me. To him be the praise and the glory for ever. He will be our preserver as long as life shall last. Amen. Dear brethren and sisters, pray for me, for the Lord hath permitted me to be cast into prison for his glory and my salvation. This I desire from my heart—may the Lord be our helper. Amen. I [327] commend you to the Lord, and to the word of his grace. I, Conrad Koch, have written this letter from the prison at Lowenberg, anno 1565.

MATTHIAS SERVAES, OF KOTTENEM.—ANNO 1655.

Matthias Servaes was an elder and teacher of the church. 1 Pet. v. 1. In the year 1565, it so happened that one evening he and some friends were gathered together at a certain place in Cologne, in order to receive instruction in the gospel. But a Judas who knew of their assembly went and fetched a double guard. They came armed, and storming the house in which the meeting was held, animated by anger

Isa. liii. 10. and malice, scattered with blows and imprisoned the flock. The prisoners like sheep were led away to the Beyen tower. Their names were all taken and they were lodged in different places. They were closely questioned who their teacher was. Matthias declared himself to be the man. Attempts were then made to induce them to forsake Christ and his holy word. Falsehood and deceit, entreaties and threatenings, every species of stratagem was resorted to. But Matthias withstood them all. Torture was then employed: but pain did not affright him. He firmly held that which God had manifested to him. The next morning he was conducted to the Hacht,[x] where also many efforts were made to ensnare his soul. From the Hacht they brought him bound to the High Court. There they read to him the imperial proclamation, and delivered him into the hands of the executioner, to be put to death in accordance with the requisition of the edict.

Matthias was ready to die, and was led as an innocent lamb to the slaughter. Lifting up his eyes to heaven, and folding his hands, he said, "O! my Father, I praise
Acts v. 41. thee that I am accounted worthy to suffer for thy name." Many people were seen running together to witness the execution, who said to their companions, "It is a pity that this good man must suffer for such a deed." On the way, a young woman came to speak to him, but was thrust from him and taken into custody. A servant also endeavoured to greet him, whom they likewise seized; but the count called to them to let him go. As Matthias came near the place of execution, he looked around and said, "There are many people here this day, the thought gives me anguish that these must all be lost." As he was about to be put to death, he cried with a loud voice and said, "O God; thou knowest well what I have aspired after, what I have

[x] [Or Hachtgericht, the name of one of five small courts of criminal jurisdiction in Cologne.]

sought in the whole course of my life, from the first, night and day." Turning to the count he said, "You know well how you have treated me, but I have forgiven you all from my heart." Thus was the life of this pious man brought to an end, being beheaded by the sword. What took place before and after his confession, and what befell him in prison, and how he exhorted, comforted, and strengthened his brethren may be seen from the following letters :— Matt. vi. 14. [323]

The first letter written by Matthias Servaes from prison to H. R. his brother in the Lord, and to his companions in the faith.

The saving grace of God, and the peace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, be multiplied abundantly to all them that believe, by the grace and anointing of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Rom. i. 7.

All is right with me, my very dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, both in the flesh and in the spirit, in body and in soul, within and without. It is all right in my judgment whether it be joy or sorrow, life or death. For I live not to myself, and I die not to myself. If I live, I live unto the Lord; if I die, I die unto the Lord. For I am in his hand, and no man shall pluck me from it. Of this I am sure. For me to die is gain. I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ my Lord. Whatever happens it serves for my consolation. My bonds and my confinement manifestly advance the gospel. For the glory of God I hope it is that I suffer, and to afford strength and consolation to all the godly who may be called to endure the like chastisement. I rejoice therefore in my tribulations, and that I am counted worthy by the Lord to suffer reproach for his name's sake (of which, indeed, I know myself to be unworthy), to fill up as it were that which is behind of Rom. xiv. 7. 2 Cor. v. 15. John x. 28. Phil. i. 21. [Col. i. 24.]

the afflictions of Christ, and which devolves on his members.
Cor. i. 5. As, therefore, the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so much the more do the consolations abound by Christ, who hath richly consoled me in all my sorrows. This shall continue by his grace to be my happiness, and theirs also who regard him as their highest good, and for that reason love him above all, and are willing for his sake to forsake and hate all things, in order that they may be loved by him alone whose name is Love. That you may attain to this as little children is my ardent desire for you all by Christ Jesus, and that you may remain therein steadfast and immoveable to the end. Amen.

Ezek. xxxiv. 7. Heb. xiii. 7. Ezek. xxxiv. 2. Further, my dear L. B. H., and all who are set to watch for the souls of men, fulfil your office with diligence. Be not idle, slothful, or negligent. Be faithful shepherds, guiding and feeding the flock of Christ with integrity and uprightness, with humbleness of mind and meekness. Be as a father that chastiseth the wrongdoing of his children, who, although he may not be able to correct them as he desires, can never forget the fatherly relation in which he stands towards them, nor that they are his children. If oftentimes he is constrained to threaten them for their disobedience and perversity, he ceases not to correct and instruct them, in the hope of restoring them to the paths of obedience. Should sadness and grief be his portion, he yields not, nor withholds the needful exhortations, dis-
1 Tim. iv. 13. cipline, and punishment. Thus do ye; give attention to reading, exhortation, and discipline, with all meekness in
Col. iii. 21. the fear of God. Be not too severe, lest they be discour-
Luke x. 34. aged; nor too gentle, lest they become slothful and careless. Like the true Samaritan, pour in oil and wine. Be attentive to what I say. Neglect not the gift which is in you. Be faithful to him who will reward your fidelity, and hath called you to be his servants, and stewards of his mysteries. Seek not to be mere stewards, but faithful

ones. Be diligent labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, and faithful builders in his house. Diligently employ the talent that you have received from the Lord. Remember the punishment of the slothful servant who would not place his Lord's money in the bank, but buried it in a napkin in the earth. Luke xix. 20.

Call to mind, my dear brother, the warning which Solomon gives, when passing the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the foolish man. He says, *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and was full of nettles, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. As I saw, I took it to heart,* says he, *I looked upon it and received instruction.* In like manner, my dear brethren, be careful, and diligently toil in the vineyard of the Lord, with the plough or with the hoe, breaking the hard stones; that is, by the word of God, in order that the good seed which is sown therein may not be stifled or destroyed. Take also the sharp two-edged sword, and prune therewith the vineyard of the Lord. Sever the unfruitful and withered branches, that the rest may bring forth more fruit to him who hath planted the vineyard. Look well to the walls of the vineyard. If in any places they begin to give way, repair them. If in other places they have fallen down, let them quickly be rebuilt, lest foxes enter the vineyard of the Lord, and dig therein and spoil it. Prov. xxiv. 30. Jer. xxiii. 29. Matt. xiii. 7. Eph. vi. 17. John xv. 2. [329] Cant. ii. 15.

What shall I more say? Feed the flock of Christ with fidelity. Watch carefully for the souls of men. Be vigilant to exercise discipline. In all your decisions, have no respect of persons. Remember judgment is the Lord's and not yours. Weigh all things in the scale of God's word. Let all your judgments be guided by his word, so that whatever you chastise, judge, or pardon, may be pardoned, judged, or chastised, according to the word of the Lord. Be careful that in the exercise of church discipline 1 Pet. v. 2. Deut. i. 17.

you aim not too high, lest a fall succeed. Excommunication is salutary for the prevention of offences where it is not abused. Care must be taken, that in the endeavour to avoid a small offence, a greater does not spring up.

Matt. xviii. 17.
1 Cor. v. 10.
2 Thess. iii. 9.

Be particularly anxious that the first commandment with promise be observed, viz.: *Children, obey your parents in the Lord.* This command is explicit, be careful to keep it. To those who have fallen away, show a friendly spirit and exhort them affectionately to repent and be converted. I refer only to those to whom the admonition will be useful; for blasphemers and scoffers must go to their own place. I write this to you, dear brethren, not as something new; but that you may bear it in mind. For I wish you to be careful not to hold one scripture with such tenacity as thereby to break another. For there are some who suddenly, without discretion, so employ the ban as to create sympathy with the fallen.[7] Therefore am I solicitous on this point. We ought to have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. We ought to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. Then let us remember his long-suffering, how he hath patiently borne with us, and let us so treat our fellow servants, that we may give no offence to any one, either in the world, or the church of God. Anxiously seek the souls of men, wherever you have hope there extend your labours. Say not, it is labour lost. Put your hand to the plough in the fear of God, and pray the Lord that while you plant and water he will give the blessing. Entreat of him the increase

Eph. vi. 1.
1 Thess. v. 15.
Titus iii. 10.
Phil. ii. 3, 5.
Matt. v. 48.
Col. iii. 12.
Matt. xviii. 29.
1 Cor. x. 32.
1 Cor. iii. 6.

7 [Much dissension existed at this time among the baptists of Holland, with respect to the use of excommunication. By some the sentence was thought to sever the culprit from all intercourse with his dearest friends and connexions: and if any of them were members of the church they were expected to avoid every species of alliance with the individual under ban. This subject divided the baptists into two parties, and traces of it remain to this day. See Het Beginsel, &c., pp. 9—12.

and success. But should success not follow, be careful that you are not guilty of neglecting the souls of men, of which I often accuse myself. Oh brethren! beware of contention. Whenever you meet, let peace dwell in your midst; that the grace of God may abide with you. Oh, my dear brother, the state of affairs in the upper country grieves me to the heart. Do not understand me to have any doubts—oh no, my brother! I remain steadfast as I stated in my letter to them. I am only solicitous on behalf of those who are innocent and would seek after godliness, whom discord may destroy. I know not how we can answer it to God. Oh! that all who are blameworthy in this matter, may weep before God and seek forgiveness for their sin. In like manner the Netherlands weigh upon my mind. I should rejoice if help could be given, and that good rules were laid down, for there is still much wanting amongst them; but I hold them dear to my heart. I wish that the pride, which many of them exhibit, were laid aside, and that they would consider what kind of people they ought to be, for what purpose they meet together, and that the elders should not remain at home when they are convoked. I do not say that they must be helped first, but that the whole matter must be taken into consideration.

My dear brethren, be lowly, nothing in your own eyes; please not yourselves. Do not think that I have written this of myself; everything is of God who useth men as his instruments, therefore give him all the glory. Let no one set himself above his brother, let each esteem other better than themselves. Submit yourselves to one another, and with humbleness of mind serve each other. I request all the brethren and sisters to watch for those who forsake the church. If an opportunity arise, tell L.[z] to reflect in

Rom. xv. 1.

Phil. ii. 3.

Eph. v. 21.

[z] [Probably Leenaert Bouwens, who took the side of severity in his pinions on the ban.]

the time of mercy; for how shall he answer in the day of judgment? If he think aright his own conscience will accuse and condemn him. O L.! repent, you have not
1 Pet. iii. 11. chosen the better part. Alas! my brethren, I have suffered much on account of these people. Avoid divisions, seek peace as much as in you lies, and pursue it.

Dear brethren, I am often visited by blasphemers.
[330] Cassander,[a] a little man and weak of body, who perverted Joachin the confectioner, has been with me, endeavouring by many falsehoods to deceive me, and to lead me captive. He read to me a printed Latin book,[b] in which it was declared that infant baptism was a plain command, and beyond contradiction the uniform practice of the whole world. He declared, but could not sustain it by Holy Scripture, that they had received it of the apostles. When I disproved it from the New Testament, he observed, If I denied infant baptism and would not believe it, how did I know that the New Testament itself was true? for, said he, we receive it on the authority of the very parties who teach infant baptism to be right.

[a] [This eminent Romanist died early in the following year. His well-meant attempts to reconcile protestants and Romanists drew upon him the hatred of both parties. Of the baptists he says: "Undoubtedly, in these people, two things have frequently been observed; the one, a fervent zeal, joined with the fear of God, and with great reverence and observation of his word; the other an erroneous interpretation of the true meaning of the scriptures, into which they have indeed been misled by certain probabilities and appearances of truth; this latter deserves compassion, the former, praise and commendation." See Brandt, i. App. p. 13. Cassander, as will be seen, spoke of the baptists from personal knowledge.]

[b] [It was probably from the Preface of his work, De Baptismo Infantium, in which he endeavours to show that infant baptism was never contradicted in the primitive church. The universal consent of Christians in all ages, Cassander thinks so powerful an argument that he believes the anabaptists cannot better be confuted than by its use. Of this he had experience he says, since a teacher of the sect, confined in the castle of Cleves, on seeing the patristic testimonies, at once abandoned his opinion. Bayle's Dict. Art. *Anabaptists.* Du Pin, Cent. xvi. pt. ii. p. 45.]

There are besides many other writings called apostolical writings (some indeed acknowledged to be spurious, and therefore rejected), which testify that all the fathers declare the New Testament to contain the doctrines of the apostles, and that this doctrine of baptism is one of them. If then the one is overthrown, how can the other be maintained? you must receive it (the New Testament) on their testimony, otherwise you can have no knowledge of it. This is also the case with baptism. He further said, that if we were right, then it must follow that for 1500 years there had been no church. Almost all, and they are not a few, who have spoken with me on this subject, have treated it in this manner. They also brought to me a man who they said had just come from Egypt. He represented to me that they had received infant baptism from the chamberlain, baptized by Philip in Egypt, and that they knew of no other baptism. But if an old man desires baptism, who has not been baptized, he must first confess his faith. This, said they, has always been the only custom there, and if any one had opposed it he would be answered, "We have received this custom from the apostles." To all this, I constantly opposed the teaching of the New Testament. I said, whatsoever agreed therewith *that* I would willingly admit, and by God's help believe; not otherwise. Again I was obliged to hear that the New Testament *had* come down to us from the fathers. By their means alone could we distinguish right from wrong. This was often said to me. I replied, It was no advantage to the unconverted king of Assyria that God employed him for the conversion of his people. It availed nothing to wicked Pharaoh that God made known by him his mighty power. In like manner, the prophecy of Caiaphas concerning Christ, although it was true, did not profit him, while he himself was disobedient to the commands of Christ. To God be all the glory, that he hath

Isa. x. 5.

Exod. vii.

John xi. 50.

himself given to us the word! Many prayers and entreaties were now addressed to me in order to move me; but as these did not produce any effect they began sharply to rebuke and threaten me. As, however, they saw it was all lost labour, they proceeded to torture me with our brother Harman. This was on the 17th of July. But blessed be the God of mercy who never forsakes his people, but at the right moment comforts them in all their sufferings and tribulations, he guarded our lips that they could not obtain from us one word that they desired to have. After questioning us, they speedily let Harman go. The main object in putting us to the rack was to force us to say how many teachers there were, their names and places of abode, in what part of the town I had given instruction, how many I had baptized, at what place I had been ordained to the office of teacher, what teachers were present on that occasion, and that I should confess the magistrates to be Christians, and infant baptism right. I pressed my lips tightly together, and yielded myself into the hands of God, suffering patiently. I remembered the word of the Lord, where he says, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* I also remembered what John says, *We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* It would appear as if I had yet much to suffer; but it is all in the Lord's hand. I can only pray, the will of the Lord be done.

Ps. xxxvii. 5.

John xv. 13.

1 John iii. 16.

Matt. vi. 10.

My brethren, in this extremity neither knowledge nor words avail anything; only a living faith, girded by the might of love, patience, hope, and obedience. A faith like that which enabled Shadrach, Meschech and Abednego, to say, *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee*

Dan. iii. 16.

(O Antichrist!) *that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the image,* nor the two golden calves, *which thou hast set up.* And if with lofty words of human wisdom, or with soft enchantments they seek to beguile us, then in the power of faith we must repel them. Depart; we desire none of your counsels, and to this we steadfastly adhere. If on such occasions we say more than necessity compels, we [331] cannot escape without injury. Let all who are made prisoners be well instructed in this matter. Col. ii. 3, 8.

But few days passed without some conversation, yet it was very little that I confessed, although we many times spent three or four hours together. Oh, exhort all the prisoners, if you can, that they lay everything aside; think of us night and day with prayer to God; our minds turn towards you. Greet all the believers with the kiss of peace. Eph. vi. 18 1 Cor. xvi. 20.

How dear to my heart are all my believing brethren; I seldom forget them; yea, I often think of them before the Lord with earnest affection and prayer. I cannot write much, for my time is more precious than gold; do not write to us, you can guess the reason; the God of heaven will be our keeper and yours. Amen. Phil. i. 3.

I, Matthias Servaes, your brother for the truth's sake, a prisoner of the Lord, remain of the same faith that ye have already heard of me. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Rom. xvi. 23.

The second letter of Matthias Servaes, of Kottenem, written to his brother from prison.

The saving grace of God be with us all. Amen.

I desire that a Dutch testament may speedily be procured for my wife (who was not at that time imprisoned), for she cannot read the German print. Further, my dear

2 Tim. iv. 17. brother, I wish you to know that I am now alone, but the Lord is with me; it is very evident to me that I shall have but few opportunities of intercourse with our brethren who are imprisoned with me, and it is probable that my situation may yet become worse.

But I know not how sufficiently to give thanks to God, and though I should like to be with my brethren, yet I prefer this; for since it pleases God thus to afflict me, it is all for the best and greatly conducive to my salvation. . . . However great the torture inflicted upon me I count the pain as nothing because God hath appointed it.

The Thursday after our apprehension, early in the morning, they brought me from the Franconian tower; our brethren were to be tortured the same morning; every thing was ready. The candles and the torches stood on the rack. As they brought me near they began to interro-
1 Pet. ii. 15. gate me, but before they had finished, and I had confessed
1 Tim. iii. 1. my faith and my office (I also putting many questions to them), more than half the day was spent. After much conversation, when they could no longer answer me (for which I give God alone the glory), he who had been most forward in proposing questions, said that baptism was our chief error. I replied: "If that is our greatest error, and for which you imprison and torture us, why do you not first inquire into the fearful errors and ungodly lives of the priests? why do you not act as in the sight of God, without respect of persons, and severely punish the frightful errors you will find amongst them?" but he did not think this worthy of an answer.

Seeing this I said: "We are, nevertheless, men, and you are no more; the fear of God forbids my regarding you as more than men; consider the matter well, and deal not with us so cruelly and tyrannically. The Lord will visit
Amos iv. 12. and punish the world's wickedness; he is judge over all; bear in mind that you must stand by our side when the

Lord shall come to judge both us and you; *for we must all,* as the scripture saith, *appear before the judgment seat of Christ,* there shall every one *receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;* then must your decisions be reviewed, and before the Lord be justified. Regard not these words, my dear L. K. as threats, or as the expressions of a haughty spirit. Regard them as an admonition; as a warning I utter them; the everlasting welfare of your soul is as precious to me as my own. Lay this to heart, and consider well how you treat us." There it ended. Rom. xiv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 10.

Our brethren were this time spared. I was racked in their stead; they led me alone to the rack in order to torture me, because I would not say where I had last met Henry, how many teachers we had, or in what place they lived. As they pressed this question upon me many times I became anxious to know the reason of their importunity; the count answered: "If we should tell you that, you would immediately reply that you wished to betray no one." I said to him: "You answer yourself." Further [332] conversation took place between us, but as they continually pressed me to answer in a way that would end in treachery, I refused to make any more confessions, unless they would first tell me the reason of their inquiries. I also told them that they ought to examine their own hearts, and in the sight of God truly say whether they could dare counsel me on this wise. I asked them several times, but they would give me no answer and left me; they said to one another that the affair was right enough, only an uproar had arisen out of it.

I commend you all to God; I have no more time to write to you. Remember me always before the Lord. Amen.

The third letter of Matthias Servaes, written to I. N.

Phil. iv. 7. May peace and joy be wrought in you by the Holy Spirit, and increase in you and in all the faithful that are Luke ii. 14. in Christ Jesus. Amen. Yea, in all those who are men of goodwill, having chosen God as their highest good, and from love desire, as obedient children their father, to serve and follow Him with strong confidence, firm and unwavering to the end, through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen.

We have received, dear brethren, the breakfast you sent us, for which we give thanks to God. Again, I send you a small thing from my poverty; take this also with thanks, and divide it among our companions in tribulation, since it is profitable for edification, and may Eph. iv. 29. minister grace unto the hearers. If ye compose hymns, or write, or speak, do it all to the glory of God; offer Gal. v. 6. thanksgivings to your heavenly Father by Christ, that he Matt. x. 37. has wrought in you that faith which, forsaking and hating all things, worketh by love, and which excites you from love (as children indebted to a father) to remain faithful unto death.

As far as possible avoid all mention of the count, for he says that he has been insulted in the hymn of Thomas the printer. Although he has so taken it, that is certainly not the meaning. He also says that, although it was his intention to do what is right, on that account he has had to bear reproach from many; therefore, dear brother, whatsoever you do, whether by word or deed, do all to the glory of the Lord, giving thanks by him to God the Father.

Further, let me inform you, dear brother, that Hendrik Altruysscher, who lives and usually sells red wine at Egelstein, has been here. He began to converse with me desiring to know whence I received my office or ministry,

but as I knew the sort of man he was, I wished him to tell me what he was called; he said that he did not know, but I further inquired whether he was not called Hendrik. He answered several times that he did not know. I then bade him go away and repent, for I would not converse with him. The count was displeased and angry, and urged me to enter into conversation with Altruysscher, but I said, No, I will not.

I have briefly related and sent this to you, dear brother, for I have no time to write much as I am closely watched; I desire that you may remain steadfast in the fear of God with all meekness and lowliness, walking in goodness and love. Please not yourself, but rather seek the welfare and edification of your neighbour, and teach the rest to do the same; I commend you to the grace of God; remember us in your prayers, which we ought also to do for you and for all men, even as we are taught by the word of God; but the God of peace and of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, perfect us in every good work, that we may do his eternal unchangeable will, and grant that all our works may be pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ. The same God, for whose name's sake we are here prepared to suffer, if it be his will, will strengthen and establish us, and well prepare us for it; to him be glory and strength for ever and ever. Amen.

Eph. iv. 2.

Eph. vi. 18.

1 Pet. v. 10.

Rev. v. 12.

We are still well in body and soul; we are joyful in hope of being numbered with those whose souls are beneath the altar awaiting the rewards of righteousness; salute, for me, the brotherhood in Christ. The grace of God be with us all. Amen.

MATTHIAS SERVAES, of Kottenem.

[341] *The seventh letter of Matthias Servaes*[c] *addressed to J. N., and his brethren.*

1 Thess. i. 1. Grace and peace be with all the faithful in Christ Jesus. Amen.

It is my wish, dear brethren and sisters, that you should know that all is well with us, that is, with me and Herman; for our hearts are full and overflowing with
Acts xvi. 25. joy. Time seems very short to us. By night, with one accord, we sing praises to our God. We are now alone. Eberhard, the bishop's chaplain, visited us again on the Saturday after St. James's day. He conversed very kindly with me on infant baptism and the resurrection of the dead. The count also entreated me, saying, "Matthias, tell me clearly, what are your views on these articles? I have already told you that your people who are confined in the other tower, have averred that the bodies of the departed shall not rise again. But I have not heard anything definite from you, and since *you* are their teacher, they must have learnt it from you." I replied, "True, count; at our last interview some words passed between us. I then gave you the same answer that I do now. I call all the prisoners to witness that the doctrine which I hold (which indeed is not mine, but
John v. 28. Christ's) and have taught, is none other than this: that
1 Thess. iv. 14. the dead shall come forth from their graves, the righteous to life eternal, the wicked to everlasting death; that we
2 Cor. v. 10. must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. But that this self-same flesh and blood shall inherit the kingdom of God, I
1 Cor. xv. 50. have no taught. On the contrary, I say that *flesh and*

[c] [The 4th, 5th, and 6th letters are chiefly hortatory, and are addressed to his relatives and to members of the church. — Van Braght, fol. 332—341.]

blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Eberhard the chaplain then said, that he did not believe that this flesh and blood should inherit the kingdom of God. I replied, "We shall all be changed, and he who wishes to know how this shall come to pass, *how the dead are raised up, and with what bodies they shall come,* let him give heed to Paul, who says, *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain, and God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him.* That," said I, "is my view. Oh! that I may be counted worthy with the righteous to rise again. For that am I solicitous. What body the Lord shall give me, that I leave with him. With this I am satisfied, and will not confess to you or any man more than this." "On this matter," said he, "we differ very little." [342]

1 Cor. xv. 36—38.

I said farther, "The cry against us is, 'One says this and another that, while a third believes so and so.' Rather go among your own people and ask them individually what they believe. Will they all agree and confess the same thing? Certainly not; very few of them indeed." "That is true," said he. Much conversation followed on the sentiments of the fathers respecting infant baptism. I rejected them all and preferred God to them; but he entreated me to reflect on this. I also desired the same of him and said, "I am sure that I hold the truth, and I desire to cleave to it, both in life and in death." I also told him of their impure and faulty church, of their brothels, gambling houses, and fencing schools, and of their daily life which resembled that of heathens. I also reminded him of the injustice and violence which they had openly inflicted on us, only because we would betray no one. I asked him to think of all this if he were a shepherd of the sheep. He said that it grieved him

1 Cor. ix. 26.

exceedingly, and it seemed to me that the Count felt ashamed. They rose up. Eberhard gave me his hand, and in a very friendly manner commended me to the Lord.

All is well with us as yet, the Lord be praised. Amen. Remember us day and night in prayer. We will do the same for you. I would exhort and warn every prisoner
Col. ii. 8. to decline controversy. Brethren, how artfully they set their snares for my soul! But I have a good hope that
Prov. i. 17. they will not succeed. *Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.* I therefore entreat every prisoner
Psa. xxxix. 2. to be circumspect and to *be dumb with silence,* while the
James i. 19. wicked, as David says, are before us. Be slow to speak,
Matt. x. 19. lest your hearts be led astray. Wait with patience till Christ shall speak in you, or his Spirit by you, according to his promise. Be not ashamed if you are not prepared to answer every question. He who was the wisdom of God, even Christ Jesus, was not ashamed, as the scriptures of the Old and New Testament sufficiently testify. If they ask you about one who is still at liberty, or is in prison, whether he was often with us, or has been baptized, reply, "I am here imprisoned to answer for myself and not for another." And if they threaten you with the rack or protracted imprisonment, let them menace, let them torture you; cast yourself with confidence on the
Prov. xxi. 1. Lord. He who hath the hearts of kings in his power will suffer them to do no more than is agreeable to His will.
Matt. vi. 10. If it is the Lord's will that you should suffer, remember
Matt. x. 30. your oft-repeated prayer, "Lord, thy will be done." And
Luke xii. 7. truly, if you trust in the Lord, the very hairs of your head are all numbered, and not one of them shall fall but in accordance with his will. Therefore, fear them not in
Heb. x. 36. the least; be not affrighted, but wait patiently and with long suffering upon the Lord, in all that may befall you for the truth's sake. Trust in God. He will never forsake you, even unto death. Amen.

My dear fellow-sufferers, if I thought it would redound to the glory of God, and in any way advance your salvation, that you should answer the questions they put to you, then I would not only exhort you to await their questions, but would heartily urge you to invite and show yourselves ready to answer their inquiries. But whether in this they seek God's glory, or the salvation of your souls and their own, I will leave it to every God-fearing lover of the truth impartially to judge. Therefore be watchful, dear brethren.

I have composed a hymn, not from levity, but to be sung to the glory of God.

Dear brethren, let me be commended in your prayers to God. I salute you all with the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. If any man love Him not, he is anathema maranatha. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.

Acts xii. 5. 1 Thess. v. 25. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

The eighth Letter of Matthias Servaes, written to his wife Aeltgen.

The grace of God be with you, and remain with you, and with all our companions in the faith of Christ everywhere. May peace and love be with you, with all patience and perseverance, that you may bear to the end all that shall be laid upon you, and fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ. Amen.

Eph. ii. 7. Luke xxi. 12. Col. i. 24.

My dear wife, from the commencement of our union your salvation has been my chief desire (the Lord is my witness). I have ever felt more concern for your soul than my own, and have exhorted you often to seek that which has now become our portion; to the Lord be all the glory and praise. My dear sister in the Lord, you [343]

well know the anxiety of mind that I have had on account of our wanderings. If any one think that I have desired them, it is a mistake; for I have often longed, if it would contribute to my salvation, to be by some means released
John xv. 27. from them, whether by imprisonment or death. But now it hath pleased the Lord that we should here on earth bear witness to his word and to his name, and that your desire should in some measure be fulfilled, that I should rather through sufferings be conducted to our Father's house than again take a journey. It was also my desire that you should share my imprisonment, which has come to pass. Let us therefore be patient, giving thanks to God who hath heard and answered our prayers. Let us
Matt. vi. 10. present no other prayer than that we have often offered, "Lord, thy will be done." I cheerfully cast myself upon the Lord, whom I have served; therefore be not anxious concerning me. But if you think that many afflictions still await us, all which depend on the good pleasure of the Lord, remember that if suffering is prepared for us,
2 Cor. i. 4. so also is a rich consolation. *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

2 Thess ii. 7. I can write no more, my time is gone. Hold fast that which you have received till the time of your departure
Rev. ii. 10. arrives. Then and not before shall you receive the crown of life. This I write to you, dear sister Anne, and to all
2 Thess. iii. 17. who are with you. I salute you with my own hand. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

2 Cor. xiii. 12. Greet one another with a holy kiss. Our brethren
Col. iv. 17. salute you all. Remember me. Be of good cheer; this is the first portion of our promised inheritance here, to be entered upon when we come to our everlasting home.
Rev. vii. 17. There our flowing tears shall be wiped away, and our
2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. sorrow be turned into joy. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding*

and eternal weight of glory; for us who *look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* Therefore avert your eyes from the things that are seen. I commend you to the grace of God. Amen.

The ninth Letter of Matthias Servaes, written from prison to F. V. H.

May the saving grace of God be multiplied unto you, and to all the godly, through Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Titus ii 11.

My much beloved friend in the Lord, F., my affection for you will not suffer me to refrain from satisfying your desire. But many things I greatly need, also paper and ink; besides which I am closely watched as if precious as gold, that I may neither receive letters nor send any. Therefore receive kindly this short letter. I have written it to promote your welfare. It is my hearty wish and counsel, that you conform your life to the word of God, to the image of Jesus Christ. Assiduously remember to observe what you said to me. Love God above all things; and forsake not the assemblies of the saints. If you love aught else than God, you are not worthy of him. Be watchful, my dear friend, in the Lord. You well know that a mere nominal faith is of no avail; it must be living faith, *faith which worketh by love.* None other will stand before God. May God, Shaddai, work such faith in you, and in all who desire it. Amen. Phil. i. 27. Heb. x. 25. Matt. x. 37. Gal. v. 6. Exod. iii. 14.

Of my welfare I cannot write as I would. The Lord fills my heart with exceeding joy, so that I could desire, if it were his will, to be led bound through Cologne, to be scourged with rods from street to street, and to suffer the tortures of the rack, in order that His name may be made known. To God be all the praise. Thanks be unto God, who hath kept the door of my lips, and

endowed me with strength, which he daily augments. He will support me to the end.

Col. iv. 18. I commend you to God. Remember me, as I also remember you. Greet all who are with you. I greet you in the Lord.

MATTHIAS SERVAES, *of Kottenem.*

The tenth Letter of Matthias Servaes, written in prison, addressed to Mar. West.

Rom. i. 7. Grace to you, and peace be multiplied from God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to all the faithful through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My much loved sister in the Lord. I am constrained by the great love which we mutually cherish since we have known each other in the Lord, to tell you how much I think of you, and of all the godly. You lie on my heart night and day. I have also understood that you remember me in much sorrow, and wish, if it were pos-
[344] sible, that God had ordered it otherwise. For this I cannot wish nor pray. I know not how he could have better appointed my lot; for great sadness was upon me, as you know, which God in his goodness has thus removed; and not only that, but he has freed me from all anxiety. Do not think that I was weary of my labour. Oh, no! cheerfully would I have served the Lord, and will yet do so if in any way I can be useful. But it is better as it is: sooner or later it must have come to pass. I trust that the Lord will soon send you a faithful servant to occupy my place, more highly gifted of Him than I have been.
Matt. xxv. 15. The Lord knows with what anxiety, fear, and anguish I ministered unto you, esteeming myself unworthy and as nothing before God and you, so much so that I scarcely
1 Cor. xv. 10. dared to lift up my eyes in your midst. But by the grace of God I have been what I have been, and his grace was

not altogether bestowed on me in vain among you. I also fulfilled my ministry with many tears, as ye know; but now, to God be the praise, all is joy, joy unspeakable.

Oh! my dear sister; how easy is the Lord's yoke, how light on my shoulder his burden! To my God I will still cleave, by his help, cost what it may; but I entreat your prayers and those of all the faithful in the Lord. We also hope to offer prayer for you. My heart's desire is that his will may be done. My dear sister, walk humbly and with watchfulness in the path of piety, that you may be saved. Grace be with you all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Matt. xi. 30. Psa. xlvi. 11. Acts xii. 5. 1 Thess. v. 25. Matt. vi. 10. Eph. vi. 24.

By me, Matthias Servaes, your brother in the Lord.

THIRTY-FOUR MEN AND EIGHT WOMEN PUT TO DEATH ABOUT THE YEAR 1566.

Of our desire to obtain information respecting the Alsatian martyrs.

Just when we were very desirous of knowing the state of our fellow believers in Alsace, and what they had suffered during the persecution which at this time befell them, the following information came into our hands,[d] extracted from a certain document prepared by the elders and teachers in Alsace, and sent hither. It is as follows:—

An extract from a letter of the Alsatian elders andteachers. Forty-two martyrs lost their lives in the country of the Bernese from 1528 to 1566.

"Respecting the brethren who were put to death for their faith in the various districts under the jurisdiction of Berne; there were executed, from 1528 to 1566, no less than forty-two persons, among whom were eight women. We have by us a brief list of their names and families, with the day and year on which each one was executed, &c."

To this brief extract the names of the elders and

d By means of our worthy friend H. Vlaming, at present resident in Amsterdam.

teachers of Alsace were appended. We would have inserted them, did we not fear by so doing to occasion them further persecution, from which they are not yet entirely free, as will presently appear.

[The baptists at this time had largely increased in the countries subject to Berne, not without the fault of the clergy, it was said, whose lives were a dishonour to the gospel and the occasion of great scandals. The council sent delegates to the chief towns of Alsace and other German districts, to threaten with punishment the ungodly clergy, and if possible to stay the progress of the so-called heresy. The fertile and opulent valley of the Emme was the principal scene of their labours. Assemblies of baptists were collected. They were required to swear allegiance to the reformation made by the magistrates, on pain of banishment; if refractory, absenting themselves from the assemblies to avoid the oath, death by the sword, or by drowning, was the award. Some few took the oath of obedience. Many more preferred exile, sold their property, and departed. Others were arrested and conducted to Berne. Walter Gerwer, who twenty years before had suffered imprisonment in Burgdorf for his faith, was sentenced to decapitation. He was an eminent teacher among the baptists, and amid innumerable difficulties had ministered to his flock the word of God. At length a price was set upon his head. One hundred guilders was the price of blood. His place of retreat was discovered. With constancy he adhered to his belief, and on the scaffold, on the 30th of July, closed a life of arduous labour in the cause of God. His doctrine it was said, tended to the overthrow of civil government, and to establish a perfect anarchy in christendom. This fatal doctrine is stated to be this, that a Christian could not be a magistrate. Notwithstanding exile and death the truth

continued to spread, and many in the neighbouring cantons yielded to its claims.][e]

HANS GEORGE.—1566.

In the year 1566, brother Hans George, count of Grootenstein, in Italy, who some years before had fled to Germany, and had conducted himself in the church of God as becometh a Christian in all humility, returned to Italy where he had left his wife. Being betrayed, he was taken into custody by persons from Venice. As they drew near to Venice by water, he was thrown overboard and drowned. It was thus secretly done to avoid any disturbance on account of his high birth. On account of his faith he suffered the loss of this life. By faith he forsook all things, disregarding rank, preferring rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the honours and rewards of this world among his own people. He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, or the nobility of this world; for he had respect to that which is yet future, and an everlasting reward which is great in heaven, and which shall not be withheld from him as a martyr, a follower and valiant soldier of Christ.[f]

Luke xxii. 48. Acts xxii. 19. Heb. xi. 25. Matt. v. 15. John xxi. 19.

HANS MANG.—ANNO 1567.

In the year 1567, Hans Mang, a hatter by trade, was committed to prison at Sundhofen, in Suabia, for the truth. He had to endure great and bitter cold, so that his feet could not be got warm at night. Besides which he had much also to withstand in the assaults and temptations

Heb. xi. 13.

e [Ruchat. Hist. Ref. vii. 84—86. Trechsel, Prot. Antitrin, ii. 366.]

f [M.S. Cronickel, fol. 94.]

Acts vii. 60. James i. 12. of the ungodly. Finally, he fell asleep in the Lord while imprisoned, having kept the faith and persevered therein patiently to the end. Therefore shall he inherit the crown of life with all the chosen people of God.[g]

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[345] NICHOLAS GEYER.—ANNO 1567.

Brother Nicholas Geyer, a miller, and a deacon of the church, was this year imprisoned at Innspruck, in the Tyrol, for the faith. The Jesuits and others made many attempts and by most cruel inquests, after the manner of Satan, to turn him aside. But he continued unmoved. Like a Christian hero he bravely persevered in his faith, and was at last condemned to death by these successors of Matt. xiv. 8. Caiaphas and Pilate. The priests, like the daughter of Herodias, were determined to have his head. In this they succeeded; for he was decapitated with a sword, and his body afterwards burnt. In the noble fight of faith he 2 Cor. ii. 14. chivalrously triumphed and kept the field in Christ, as one whose courage could not be destroyed by tribulation, torture, or grief. Water could not quench his love, nor Rom. viii. 35. sword sever it. Fire was powerless to consume it; it was God's highway to life eternal. For by love to God through divine grace, we enter paradise. Let us not be separated from love.[h]

CHRISTIAN LANGEDUL, CORNELIUS CLAES, MATTHEW DE VIK, AND HANS SYMONS.—ANNO 1567.

On Sunday morning, August 10, 1567, Christian Langedul went out to send a letter to his brother R. L.

[g] [MS. Cronickel, fol. 94.]

[h] [In the MS. Cronickel, the name of this martyr is written Nickel Geyersbühler. He was chosen deacon in the year 1563, at the same time with three others, fol. 91, 94.]

He then proceeded to a place called Schelleken, where he had appointed to meet some brethren, to assist in the arrangement of a dispute between two persons. 1 Cor. vi. 5.

The meeting having been spied out, a certain captain, Lamotte by name, who was at that time in Antwerp under the pretence of seeking some of his soldiers, surrounded the house with armed men, and immediately sent a messenger to the margrave. Meanwhile Christian conversed with the captain in French, and communicated to him the [346] reason of this meeting. During the conversation some of those assembled escaped by a back-door.

When the margrave arrived on horse-back, he entered Acts viii. 3. the house with his men and took the rest prisoners. Acts xiv. 22. He conveyed them to the Steyne, where they spent patiently the sorrowful time till the next day, when they were examined on their faith. This the four brethren Matt. x. 32. mentioned above courageously confessed. They were then miserably tortured, and so cruelly handled that they feared death less than the rack, as is related by Christian in a letter to his wife.

Having spent a month here in great anxiety, they were John xvi. 2. at last condemned to die. The tidings of their approaching 2 Cor. xiii. 11. end filled them with satisfaction and comfort. Christian, however, grieved much on account of his wife and children, whose distress occasioned him, especially during the last night of his life, great sorrow of heart.

On Saturday the 13th of September, in the early morning, these four friends were fetched, and being bound two and two together, were led to the great market-place before the Stadt-house. Here the soldiers formed a ring. In the middle was a small hut and four stakes, to which the martyrs must be bound. Hans Symons and Matthew Wisd. i. 11. went first, then Cornelius and Christian. On the way Christian said to the people—"Had we spoken falsehoods we should have escaped this." Matthew said, "Citizens, John xvii. 17

that for which we suffer is the truth, and because we live
Matt. x. 28. according to the word of God." Hans Symons exhorted his companions not to fear them who can kill the body;
Rom. xii. 1. but Him who has power to destroy the soul. Thus speaking they came to the place where their sacrifice must be offered. The executioner's assistants first took Christian and entering the hut bound him to the stake, whence he continued to exhort his brethren without, piously to
1 Cor. xvi. 20. suffer for the truth. They now gave each other the parting kiss of peace. Cornelius was next bound to the stake, then Matthew, and Hans last of all. Drums were beaten that their words might not be heard. The executioner then strangled them, and setting fire to the faggots which formed the hut, these four friends came to a blessed
Matt. x. 22. end, in accordance with the word of God, *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.*

The first Letter written in prison, by Christian Langedul to his wife, the 11th of August, 1567.

Rom. i. 7. Grace and peace be with you all from God our heavenly Father, by Christ Jesus, in the power of his Holy Spirit.
John xiv. 26. Amen.

Matt. xii. 50. My chosen and heartily beloved wife, and sister in the Lord through faith, which faith I hope to retain by the
Gal iii. 26. mercy of God through all eternity.

If I could have written before this I would have done so, especially since I have experienced during the short time of my imprisonment great mercy, consolation, and joy, and I pray God that he will grant it to me to the end to the furtherance of my salvation. Yet I have felt great sorrow and shed many tears about you, the children, and grandmother, and all friends. This I still feel, the Lord knows, and shall continue to feel till the time of separation is come.

I am astonished at and am not yet able to comprehend the goodness of God; for he is a God of all consolation, who hath comforted me in all my trials. I hope that he will always afford you comfort according to your need. 2 Cor. i. 5.

My dear wife, be of good comfort in all the afflictions that with me you may be called to endure; *for the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* We have commenced pilgrimage, and have always reckoned on these costs. You will comfort yourself with the word of God, as I hope you now do, and I have great confidence that I shall have less cause of grief on your account than I have hitherto had, for I know your courage, and I hope the Lord will strengthen us to the end. Pray for us always. We have need of your prayers. The prayer of the righteous availeth much. I bear you on my heart, and hope after this life to see you in eternity, where we shall part never more. If I have ever grieved you, forgive me for the Lord's sake. I cheerfully forgive whatever has been done injuriously towards me, and I trust the Lord will forgive me all my sins and infirmities. I am overwhelmed with astonishment, and will ever praise the Lord for that which he hath done for me. He is a marvellous and gracious God. This I only now fully realize. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Rom. viii. 18. Isa. xl. 29. Acts xii. 5. James v. 16. Matt. vi. 14 Matt. xix.

To-day we were examined before the margrave. Out of six of us four steadfastly confessed the faith. We could not do otherwise. Either soul or body must perish, just as we forsake or deny the Lord. [347] Matt. x. 32. Luke xii. 8.

Thus Hans Symons, Cornelius the shoemaker, and Matthew, made their confession. And I also, though unworthy, confessed the Lord, and hope to persevere in it to the end to his glory. Yet I must declare that it was not by mine own strength or merit; but by God's mercy and grace; for through weakness are we made strong. Be ye comforted in the Lord, and do your best for the Eph. i. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph. vi. 4.

children of whom I dare not think, so much am I grieved on their account.

When the margrave questioned me to-day concerning my faith, it was entirely on the subject of baptism. I
Eph. iv. 5. opposed him as long as I could, saying, that I held but one baptism agreeably to the gospel, and to Christ's own
Matt. xxviii. 19. precept and command. But he constantly urged; "Say, yes or no, either that you are satisfied with the baptism of children, or have received another." I snid that I knew nothing of infant baptism. But that was not enough; I was obliged to confess that I had received another. Thus I confessed it, and have not since regretted
John xviii. 37. it, and trust I never shall regret it, since it is the veritable truth.

I must now conclude, for my paper is exhausted. Greet heartily for me all my friends in the Lord, my other friends also according to the flesh; but especially greet dear mother, and comfort her the best that you can. My distress is very great on her account, and on that of the children. I think often of my sweet P., but rejoice that he is not much in my mind. Do the best you can in
1 Thess. v. 26. every thing. I salute you with the holy kiss of peace.
Matt. xxiv. 22. I hope the Lord will shorten my days, because he loves me. I still hope to write to L. E., if I can get time. Greet her for me. I commend you to the Lord.

Gritten by your poor husband, Christian Langedul, a prisoner for the testimony of the Lord.

The second Letter of Christian Langedul, in which he relates how cruelly he was tortured, and his sufferings of body, together with his hope and confidence in the Lord.

My dear wife. Yesterday, about three o'clock, I wrote you a letter, which I now send yon. I could not then

send it, for shortly after the margrave came to torture us. We were all four, one after the other, sorely racked, so that we have at present little inclination to write. But we cannot refrain, we must write you all.

Cornelius was the first taken; then Hans Symons, with whom the captain went into the chamber of torture. I thought, we now shall have to suffer exceedingly to do him pleasure. It was next my turn. You may conceive how I felt. As I approached the rack near the gentlemen, I was ordered to strip or to say where I lived. I looked sorrowful as you may suppose. I said, "Will you ask me any more questions besides that?" They were silent. I then thought, "I know how it must be; they will not spare me. I therefore undressed, and gave myself up to the gentlemen, fully prepared to die. They now cruelly racked me. I think two cords fastened on my thighs and legs broke. They also drenched me with water, pouring it into my mouth and nose. After releasing me they inquired if I would now speak. They entreated me, then menaced me; but I did not open my mouth. God had shut it. They then said, "Give him another taste of it." This they did, calling out, "Away, away; stretch him another foot." I thought, "You can but kill me." While thus lying stretched out, drawn by cords on my head and chin, and on my thighs and legs, they said, "Speak, speak." Rom. xiv. 8.

They now chatted with one another about the account which J. T. had prepared of my linen, which amounted to six hundred and fifty-five pounds, the sum it would fetch by auction. The margrave said in French, "He knows French well;" but I was lying in misery. Again I was asked, "Will you not speak?" I kept my mouth closed. They said, "Say where you live, and where your wife and children are." But I said not a word. "What a dreadful thing!" said they in French; but I replied not,

for the Lord kept the door of my lips. After they had long tried to make me speak, they at last released me. Two of them, the executioner and his servant, then carried me between them from the rack. You can imagine how they had dealt with us and what we must have felt, and still feel. Holding me by my arms they dragged me out of the torture chamber into the porter's room above, where was a good fire of oak wood, and there gave me once or twice some Rhenish wine to drink, which brought
[348] me a little to myself. After I had warmed myself awhile, they again dragged me into another room, over the porter's room, where they showed some tokens of pity. They offered me more wine, applied cabbage-leaves, and gave me a little of everything you had sent me, which greatly refreshed me. More wine was sent for, and they helped me into bed, but the sheets were so coarse that they hurt my legs and thighs very much. However, the sheets and pillow which you sent soon came with two or three handkerchiefs. They immediately rolled me in the sheets with some cabbage-leaves, which gave me some relief. If the sheets had not come I know not how I could have passed the night. As it was I slept well, but am not yet able to stand, for my feet from the tension are still in-
2 Cor. xii. 9. sensible. But I trust, through God's mercy, all will be well.

1 Cor. x. 13. Our God is mighty. He did not suffer me to be tempted
John xiv. 6. above that I was able to bear. My confidence in him is strong that he will continue to afford me his grace, for I am sure that there is no other way or truth to be found.
2 Tm. iv. 2. Therefore hold it fast, in season and out of season.

I have received your letter, and thank you kindly that you have remembered me, as you have always done. I wrote you an answer in my first letter, even before I received yours. I have much more to write, but at present cannot do it. Time is fleeting.

Matthew was tortured after me. He named his own house and the street where we live. He also said that we lived in a gateway, and I think there is no other gateway in the street but ours. You had better therefore immediately remove if you have not left, for I think the magistrates will go there. Let no one go to the house who is in any danger of apprehension. He also mentioned the house of R. T., and the street in which F. V. St. lives. Do immediately the best you can in this matter. He is very sorry that he did so. Cornelius and Hans did not disclose anything. I have yet much to say, but the time is short. I hope to write again to-day if it please God. I should like it very well if H. T. would come out. I greet you all heartily. It was well that J. T. went away yesterday, for the margrave came in soon after. But I cannot write any more; the day of my departure will shortly come.

Col. iv. 15.

Acts xx. 22.

I commend you to the Lord and to the word of his grace. Pray fervently for us. He who asketh shall receive. Of you and the children I dare scarcely think; it grieves me much to part with you. Let our friends be content, for I am well satisfied, though I am sorely grieved on your account. It is the Lord's will.

Eph. vi. 18.

Matt. vii. 7.

From your poor husband, Christian Langedul, in prison at Antwerp on the Steyne, the 12th of Aug. 1567.

Luke xxi 12.

I am not much recovered from the torture as you may suppose; but I hope all will be well, and that you will not fret too much about it. If J. T. could bring my account-book with him, I should be glad. I would either show him everything, or write it. Let him bring something to seal our letters.

Another Letter from Christian Langedul, in which he relates the state of his mind, his nothingness, and the regard he has for his son-in-law, J. T.; also his fear of being again tortured.

1 Cor. i. 3. Grace, mercy, and joy in the Holy Ghost, from God
Rom. xiv. 7. our heavenly Father, by Christ Jesus, be with you my
2 Tim. iv. 8. beloved wife in the Lord, with all those who love his appearing.

My very dear wife.—I hope it is already known to you how I am by the two letters which I wrote you yesterday. I trust you have received them, for I wrote therein all my
Acts xv. 11. mind. I am still steadfast in the Lord. May he be praised to all eternity for the grace which he has given to
1 Tim i. 15. me, a poor and unprofitable sinner. I deem myself unworthy of the honour to which the Lord hath called me. It cometh not of myself, nor of my own power. I there-
Col. i. 23. fore hope in his mercy to remain steadfast to the end in
Matt. x. 22. that truth and faith once delivered to the saints. For I am perfectly persuaded and am very sure, and have been so during the whole term of my pilgrimage, now about twelve years, which is indeed but a short time, that no
Isa. l. 9. other way will ever be discovered. In this I hope to remain; not in my own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. By God's mercy I hope to give all those whom during life I may have grieved, cause of rejoicing in my death, and trust that all whom I have at any time
Matt. vi. 13. wronged will forgive me, for I have ever been ready to
Eph. iv. 32. forgive those who have trespassed against me. I hope that both God and men will forgive me.

I am greatly concerned about J. T., for I know his
[349] kindness. I will, however, pass this by, and wish him,
Gal. v. 6. as I have often done, to possess true faith. This the
John vi. 65. Lord only can give; but he must pray for and sincerely
Matt. vii. 7. desire it. Cheerfully, if it were possible, would I die a

second time for him and for all friends, that they might be saved. Much have you already done, J. T., for my poor wife (your mother) and my children, and will, I hope do yet more. Your mother is a woman that fears God with all her heart; converse with her, she will seek nothing but the salvation of you both. But I will say no more on this matter at present, for the time will soon come to send this letter. I told you yesterday that I hoped to write you to-day; but I could not do it. Matthew and I lay in bed till two o'clock. We were afraid that the margrave would come to torture Cornelius once more, and we also feared that we should again be tortured. We trembled much at the prospect, for the pain is frightful; we do not fear death near so much. Cornelius was so racked and scourged the second time that it required three men to carry him upstairs, who say that he could scarcely move a limb, only his tongue. He sent to us to say that if they come to him again he thinks that he must sink under it. As the margrave did not come yesterday, we expect him here to-day. The Lord help us! for the pain is excruciating.

John xv. 13

Rev. xiv. 7.

Acts iv. 21.

Matt. xxvii. 26.

Acts xvi. 22.

John xiii. 16.

I received yesterday a small basket of eatables from J. T., and a nightcap which I lent to Matthew. I should like to have, as opportunity offers, another night-cap, also a comb, and a Testament, or something else to read, or a hymn-book to refresh ourselves with the word of God. One of the turnkeys will convey it to us; his name is Peter. I send you enclosed a memorandum and the account of W. D. B. I was told yesterday that J. T. and P. V. D. endeavoured to see us, but were prevented because the margrave had said he would come. He did not however come, on account of a great banquet at Mansfield, at which he was present.

We are told as I write that the margrave will hold to-day a court for judgment; I hope it is on our account.

Acts xii. 5. Pray for us. I hope that God will strengthen us by his
Isa. xl. 29. power, which is above them all. Oh! that we might be thus speedily released; but I fear the contrary.

cts xx. 32. I commend you to the Lord and to the word of his grace. Adhere always to the truth; this confidence I have in you. I greet you and all the godly heartily in the Lord. Peace be with you. Matthew also greets you. As opportunity occurs greet all our friends, and especially grandmother. Matthew bids me say, if he has grieved you by not keeping a better watch on his lips, that he is sorry from the bottom of his heart.

Col. iv. 17. Written in bonds at Antwerp, this 13th August,
2 Cor. xii. 10. 1567, by me, your poor husband, Christian Langedul.
Eph. vi. 18. Do the best you can; be of good cheer and pray for us.

[357.] *Farewell Letter of Christian Langedul to Maeyken Raedt, his wife, written after he was condemned to death.*

Rom. i. 7. Grace and peace from our heavenly Father, by Christ
Rev. i. 9. Jesus, be with you, my dearly beloved wife and sister in the Lord. May the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, comfort
John xiv. 26. you in your distress, which he will surely do according to
John xvi. 23. his word.

I hope, my dear wife, that as all things minister to the salvation of Christians, whether tribulation or sorrow, so
Heb. xii. 11. this trial will redound to your as well as to my salvation, although according to the apostle's teaching no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous. Yet, my beloved one, it shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who by good works seek everlasting life; as we in our weakness have done in all sincerity. Nevertheless, by God's grace I hope to inherit salvation, and am of good courage, and will to all eternity
Rom. v. 5. praise the Lord for his love. Oh Lord! now must the

wine-press be trodden. I am ready, the Lord be praised. 2 Cor. i. 3.
He who hath comforted us in all our tribulation is the God of all consolation. Oh! that I could praise the Lord as I desire, for the comfort and the strength he has afforded poor unworthy me.

Therefore, my dear, comfort yourself in the Lord and 1 Cor. xiii. 11.
in his word, in which you shall find great consolation and Jer. xv. 16.
refreshment. May the Holy Spirit dwell in you in all John xvi. 13.
wisdom, of which I am assured, for the Spirit of God is in you and will lead you into all righteousness and truth.

I received your letter at noon to-day, and thank you for it. J. was with me. We could scarcely speak with each other. I felt rather sad after he left me, for the jailor drove us away, saying that the margrave was coming. I half thought it was not so, as it proved, for he came not. I much desired to have a longer interview with him; may the Lord grant it. Tell J. T. and his John viii. 32.
wife that I heartily desire their salvation, and wish all men to know the truth. If in weakness I have promised them, I hope to-day by divine grace in power to show it. J. told me that you were writing to me another letter. My dear, I fear you are too much concerned about me; be patient, the end will soon come.

I commend you to the Lord and to the rich word of Acts xx. 32.
his grace. Greet all my friends with the peace of the Lord, R. Langedul, also your sister, as opportunity may arise. Greet cordially all friends, and bid them farewell from me. Adieu, my dearest love. Adieu.

Written by your husband and poor brother in the Matt. xii. 50.
Lord, Christian Langedul, this 12th September, 1567, a prisoner condemned to death for the testimony of Christ Acts xii. 4.
and a good conscience. We all four heartily greet you xxiii. 11. Rev. i. 9.
in the Lord. The Lord hath filled us with comfort and 1 Cor. i. 4.
courage, as Kalleken who has been with us will have told

you. Thank R. for his kind letter which greatly refreshed
Ps. ciii. 1. me, the Lord be praised.[1]

[358.] On the 8th of November James Mesdag was burnt at Courtrai, in Flanders, after an imprisonment of more than twenty months, in the public square opposite the court-house. During the chief part of the time his feet were confined in the stocks. His native place was Chapel le Poele, near Ypres. Three other persons were martyred with him, a young lad named Aertz, and two men of Courtrai, named Joos Kasteel and Charles. They died cheerfully confessing their faith and their attachment to the truth.

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[366] ## ADRIAN WILLEMS.—1568.

In the year 1568 tyranny and persecution raged greatly against Christians, so that very many were imprisoned and put to death. On the 4th of April, in the morning, between one and two o'clock, Adrian Willems, my father, was apprehended by Steven de Wit, bailiff of Vianen, and brought to the prison at Battestein, where he was kept in confinement fifty weeks and one day.

On the 8th of May, 1568, the bailiff, with some members of the court came from Vianen to interrogate him concerning his faith, which he unhesitatingly confessed. On their asking him who were his associates he refused to tell them. The bailiff therefore threatened him with the rack. On the 5th of June the executioner was brought

[1] [A letter dated September 10th, was addressed by Langedul to his brother, in which he exhorts him to steadfastness in his pilgrimage, and briefly relates the purport of a conversation of two hours he had had with a priest on infant baptism. The priest rested his argument on the traditions of the fathers. Simons and Cornelius also wrote affectionate epistles to their wives and fellow Christians. Van Braght, ii. fol. 349, 351, 356.]

for that purpose. His hands were bound behind his back, and he was then made to climb a ladder, the executioner threatening to dislocate all his limbs, or that he would know who were his companions in the faith. Finding threats of no avail, he was permitted to descend without suffering any torture.

The bailiff next sent a monk to him to rob him of his faith. After much discussion and many words the monk left him without effecting any thing. At various times other monks and priests attempted to lead him astray, but with no better results.

On account of the anxieties attending the persecution, and the tyranny which was at that time exercised, I concealed the account of his discussions with the monks, and other letters written by him from prison, behind my bed, in the roof. It came to pass, however, that in the year of our Lord, 1571, in the month of February, the waters of the dyke rose so high as to wash away many houses and throw down walls, destroying the letters and papers, to my very great sorrow. Thus our children have been deprived of the advantage of seeing and reading for themselves the piety and courage of their grandfather, when called, for the gospel's sake, to suffer and die, and with what joy he received the visits of his friends in prison, whither, with great peril, I have myself gone.

On the 29th day of June of the aforesaid year, 1568, the above mentioned bailiff announced that he would have a court day on the next day, the 30th of the month. He then presented his accusation and demanded that he should be burnt at the stake, and his goods confiscated to the king. Many court days were, however, held, in which various documents were presented on both sides, the bailiff persisting in his demand for sentence to be passed. The justices first required the payment of thirty-two guilders, which sum having received, they withdrew into

the chief court, whence returning, they brought with them the sentence of death.

A little while after this, on the 21st of March, 1569, it was announced that he should receive the next day the sentence of death. As he well knew that his life would not be spared, but that he would be condemned to die, he resolved on preparing a last and a farewell letter to his wife and children. He had just begun to write when a monk came to him in order to annoy him, and to endeavour to unsettle his faith. This he resisted, and in the evening left him that he might retire to rest. The next day, at four o'clock in the morning, the monk came again to pester him as much as he could. About eight o'clock he was fetched from the chamber in which during the whole time of his incarceration he had been confined,
[367] and loaded with fetters. They were accustomed to unlock them only at night, when he was about to retire to rest, and in the morning in order that he might get up. He was then led into the kitchen, where a table was spread with food, of which he partook. He received gratefully the drink offered to him by Stephen de Wit, to remove from his mind all suspicion of unkindness towards him, although he had delivered him to death. The monk made every effort he could to draw him aside, but could not succeed.

Thence they conducted him to the Stadthouse, his hands bound, and the monk by his side, to receive the sentence of death. The executioner and two officers, all well armed, also accompanied him, walking both before and behind him, leading him as a harmless sheep to the slaughter. Arriving at the Stadthouse the court was opened, and the bailiff again demanded that sentence should be passed. The justices now asked, "Adrian Willems, is there any thing you desire to say?" He answered, "I have nothing to say, except that I wish you to remem-

ber that you must also appear before the judgment seat of Christ, who will pass just judgment upon the evil and the good, on the living and the dead." They then rose up. On their return from the council-chamber they pronounced sentence, that Adrian Willems should be executed with the sword, and his body placed in a coffin and buried under the gallows. Dejected and sorrowful, they again rose and broke up the court, leaving him in the hands of cruel men, who stripped him, and, with his eyes bound, led him away from the Stadthouse, hastening to execute the sentence the justices had just passed upon him. The deed was done.

Thus the aforesaid Adrian Willems cheerfully resigned himself to death, preferring his faith to the temporary enjoyment of life with apostacy, and commending his soul into the hands of God, the faithful Creator; and by his departure from this life he gave his testimony to the gospel, and sealed his unfeigned faith with his blood. Amen.

JAN PORTIER.—1568.

In the same year a brother, named Jan Portier, born at Rouen, in Flanders, a fuller by trade, who had also lived as a porter with the lady Van Meessen, was apprehended at Meesen. Having confessed his faith he was grievously tortured, the first time with the iron screw, the next by suspension from his thumbs with heavy iron weights hanging from his feet, being at the same time cruelly scourged. He was, however, spared the torture of the rack. As all these torments failed to divert him from the faith, he was at last adjudged to death by fire. For the testimony of Jesus Christ he was therefore committed to the flames, but so small was the fire that the smoke suffocated him. This took place at Meessen, in November, 1568.

Luke xii. 3.

Rev. vi. 9.

JOHN OF PARIS, PETER OF CLEVES, HENDRIK MAELSCHALK, AND LAURENCE PETERS—1568.

The above-named persons were not members of the church, but were applicants for membership. In the year 1568, they were apprehended at Ghent, in Flanders, whither they had gone to hear the preaching of God's word. They were conducted to the Gravenstein. After they had freely confessed their faith, adhering to it with great steadfastness, they were condemned, in Passion week, to be strangled and burnt. At the time of their arriving at the scaffold there were in Ghent nineteen companies of Spanish troops. The Spanish captains, seeing the executioner about to strangle them, urged him to employ other means. The executioner then consulted with the field officer. He ordered them to be burnt alive, contrary to the sentence passed upon them. While the executioner fetched some chains the captains grossly abused and beat the brethren. Hearing that they were to be
Matt. vi 9. burnt alive, the brethren sung together the hymn, *Father of heaven, on thee I call.* So unmercifully were they beaten by the Spaniards that the eye of one of them was knocked out and lay on his cheek. They were then burnt alive, the
[368] Spaniards shouting and throwing sticks into the fire, par-
John xvi. 2. ticipating in the madness of those who thought thereby to do God service.

Hendrik Maelschalk wrote a letter from his prison, in Ghent, on the 16*th January,* 1568, *as follows:—*

Abounding grace, joy, peace, mercy, and an eternal salvation be multiplied unto you from God our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins that he might redeem us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father, to whom

be praise and honour, power and blessing, for ever and ever. Amen.

After our salutations we wish you, Goelken, our dear friend in the Lord, to know, and all our dear friends who fear God, that we four prisoners at Ghent, for the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, are well according to the flesh, and continually praise him in the spirit for his strengthening grace. For we are fully resolved, through his grace, to remain steadfast in the Lord, and not to forsake him in life or in death. Blessed be God, who strengthens us by his grace, for we are poor and miserable. By the help of God have we continued to this day, and hope, by the same helper, to persevere unto the end; for since he has been tempted he is also able to save them that are tempted. For he has said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say*, with the apostle, *The Lord is my helper.*

Matt. x. 28. Rev. xix. 10. Heb. x. 39. Heb. ii. 18. Heb. xiii. 5.

Now, heartily beloved brethren, if God is with us who can be against us? For all men are the work of his hands. He hath power to create and to destroy as it shall please him. Why, then, should we be afraid of mortal men? Much more should we fear God. He alone can save or condemn. Even if we escape the hands of men, we cannot escape His power. We will therefore say with Susanna, "It is better to fall into the hands of men than to sin against God."

Rom viii. 31. Isa. xlv. 7. Sus. v. 23.

We hope, therefore, by no means to forsake the Lord; but to press towards the land of promise, which abounds with every blessing. The Lord will confirm and strengthen all who fear him, and prepare them by his grace and compassion for its enjoyment.

I, Hendrik, have written to you all, dear friends, to communicate somewhat of the state of our minds. It is my earnest prayer for you all that you will firmly abide in the fear of the Lord; for they who fear the Lord must

do that which is right in his sight, and they who love him must diligently do his pleasure, and humble themWisd. xi. 1. selves before him. "Fear God," says the prophet, "depart not from him; then shall ye enter into everlasting happiness and joy." They who fear the Lord it shall be well with them in their extremity, and in the day of death they shall be blessed. Therefore, dear friends, let us always fear the Lord with all our heart and mind; let us be obedient unto him and keep his word,
Luke xi. 25. for *blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep*
John xv. 10. *it,* who also love him, and keep his commandments. Whosoever loves him is known of him. But he who
1 John ii. 4. says, *I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a*
1 John iv. 18, 19. *liar;* in him the love of God is not perfected. Therefore,
2 Cor. viii 9. my dear friends, let us love him, because he first loved us, even as Paul testifies, *that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty*
2 Cor. v. 21. *might be rich. Yea, he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Seeing then that we know that the Lord hath loved us, and hath poured out upon us the abundant riches of his grace, let us take heed that we
Heb. iii. 14. receive not the grace of God in vain; *for we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.*

Col. ii. 6. Therefore, dear friends, *as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught,* saith the
1 Pet. v. 12. apostle, well knowing that it is *the true grace of God wherein ye stand.* Therefore, be diligent to make your
2 Pet. i. 10. calling and election sure, *for* says Peter, *if ye do this ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and*
Heb. x. 23. *Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering.* Let us always anxiously watch,

looking for the Lord, as good and faithful servants, that he may not come and find us unprepared. May we be always ready, like the five wise virgins, whose lamps were furnished with oil, and who went in to the marriage feast. The five foolish virgins were obliged to remain without. [369.] Let us not be like the foolish but like the wise virgins. We commend you to God, and to the consoling word of his grace, which will confirm and strengthen you, and us also, in all truth and righteousness.

Luke xii. 35. Matt. xxv. 4. Acts. xx. 32.

Further, my dearly beloved Goelken, and all other dear friends who may read this letter, be pitiful to my weakness. I feel myself indeed to be unworthy of thus exhorting you, for I well know you are taught of God. But I have done this from love to you, because I heard that you wished to hear from us. Receive it therefore kindly. Further, if you desire to know somewhat concerning our imprisonment, whether the end of it is at hand, we can only say that we have heard very little about it. We expected to have presented our sacrifice before Christmas, for we heard it spoken of as being soon; but we are always ready for it by the grace of God. Cordially, beloved friends, pray for us that we may endure to the end, and present to the Lord an acceptable sacrifice. In our weakness we hope to set you an example. We send you three new hymns as an affectionate greeting; though they are simple, yet accept them kindly. Love has prompted them. Farewell, till we meet in eternity. Amen.

John ix. 45. Rom. xii. 1. Acts xii. 5. Matt. x. 22. 1 Cor. xvi. 14.

Greet very heartily for us, your husband, and Grietgen your sister, and Bet. and Cor. Vesw., Anna van L. and Susanna. We salute all who fear the Lord.

Written by me Hendrik Maelschalk, imprisoned at Ghent for the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, the 26th January, 1568.

Dear friends, the Lord hath truly said that he will come

as a thief in the night, for yesterday I finished and sealed this letter, thinking to send it to you. But the next morning it came to pass, what we little expected when we finished our letter, that we were again examined, all four
Thess. v. 2. of us. Therefore I say that the Lord said truly that he will come as a thief in the night. We were all four heard, one after the other, in presence of two commissaries. They asked many stupid questions, which it were too long to relate here. They did not interrogate us concerning our faith, except that they inquired whether we had been baptized or re-baptized. John of Paris said, that he had been baptized. Laurence said that he had not been baptized according to the scriptures. Peter said, that he was not baptized at all. I said, that we were not anabaptists, and that I was not baptized. They asked Peter, Would he be baptized if he were set at liberty? He said, "Yes, truly, if I were found fit." Again they inquired, Would he renounce his present opinions? He replied, "I do not regard this as an opinion, but as the true faith." They then asked me, Whether I would abandon my faith or opinions? I replied, that I had renounced falsehood and had embraced the truth. If, therefore, I should recant, I must recant the truth, in which I hoped by God's mercy to remain. But it were too long to write all their questions. To John of Paris they said that we should soon be despatched; but that we must have patience yet nine or ten days more. They would also send, they said, some persons to instruct us, to whom we might listen if we pleased. We are therefore expecting some priests; but we hope to be on our guard, for we know well what they want.

Thus, dear friends, we are all of good cheer, to God be everlasting praise and thanksgiving! We trust to hold fast the faith, whether in life or in death, through the mercy of the Lord. We do not expect to remain in con-

finement much longer; for it appears that we are already given over into the hands of the Council; that they have received orders from the Duke of Alva to despatch us quickly, so that neither the bailiff nor the justices have anything more to do with us. We therefore bid you all farewell, dear friends, and entreat you to be always diligent. We hope to go forward in the strength of the Lord, and that he will prepare us for the end through his grace and mercy. Amen. January 27, 1568.

Written by Hendrik Maelschalk.[k]

Fear not them which kill the body; but fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matt. x. 28.

KAREL DE RAET, AND HIS WIFE GRIETGEN, HANS SCHAAK, WILLIAM THE TAILOR, AND CHRISTINA HIS WIFE.—ANNO 1568.

On the 5th of May, 1568, some brethren were assembled to hear the preaching of the word of God at Tilleghem, Matt. vii. 2 near Bruges, in Flanders. They were assaulted by a number of persons who had come out to fetch may-poles, and five were apprehended; namely, Karel de Raet, a [370] shepherd, born at Wingen; Hans Schaak, a rope-maker, from the Schaak at Courtrai; with William the tailor, from Hondschote; and two others whose names are unworthy of record here because they did not remain steadfast in the truth. The wives of Karel and William were not apprehended at the same time with their husbands. Karel's wife was not united to the church, although she stood as a candidate. In the meantime it so happened, while these men were prisoners, that Martin Lem, a burgomaster of Bruges, went out with the watchmen about midnight, and

[k] [In Een Liedtboecken, fol. 13, where this martyr is commemorated, he is called Henrick Maesschap.]

first apprehended Christina, the wife of William the tailor. As one of the watchmen was conducting Martin Lem away from the house where he thought Grietgen, Karel's wife, might be found, passing along the fortification, between the Esel port and the Jerusalem church,[1] they unexpectedly met her with two of her children. "See," said Martin Lem, "God hath delivered this harlot into our hands," and inquired of her, "Where are you going?" she answered in her fright, "To church." He immediately replied: "This is not the time to go to church; where is your husband?" she answered, "You know that well." He asked, "Have the two children been baptized?" she said, "No." "Have they then no name," he inquired? She replied, "Yes." "How is that?" said he; "how can they have names before they are baptized?" She answered: "You give puppies and other animals names, why not to our children who are created after the image of God? I wist not that the lords of Bruges were so blind." "Say you so," returned Martin Lem, "you shall be burnt." "That I know," said she; "but there is laid up for me a crown of life." Thus were these two women also led away to prison.

Gen. i. 27.
John ix. 39.
2 Tim. iv. 8.
James i. 12.

Much sorrow, suffering, and agony befel them all in order to induce them to renounce their faith, but all in vain. The men were first sentenced to be burnt on the hillock outside Bruges. There they cheerfully presented their sacrifice to the Lord. A few days after the two women, also remaining steadfast in their attachment to God and his truth, were sentenced, and burnt in the Grand Place,[m] within the city, waiting the advent of Him who shall avenge all their sufferings.

Rom. xii. 1.
Matt. xxiv. 13.
John xvii. 17.
2 Thess. i. 6.
Rev. vi. 10.

[1] [So called on account of a copy of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem which it contains.]

[m] [Before the Craenenburg probably, the prison of the emperor Maximilian in 1488.]

JACOB DIRKS AND HIS TWO SONS, ANDREW JACOBS AND JAN JACOBS.—1568.

During this sanguinary and fearful time of persecution, the pious Jacob Dirks and his two sons fell into the hands of the tyrants. This Jacob Dirks, a tailor by trade, dwelt with his family at Utrecht; but it being discovered that he was a member of the Mennonite community, the magistrates wished to arrest him. Fearing their tyranny he fled to Antwerp. His wife not having the same views, remained behind for some time, but the constables seized her goods and kept possession of about one half. While Jacob Dirks and his family resided in Antwerp his wife died at Utrecht; but he and his two sons, though they had escaped the hands of the tyrants at Utrecht, fell afterwards into the clutches of the wolves at Antwerp, in order that their faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, might be tried by fire. They were therefore condemned and burnt at the stake, not for any crime that they had perpetrated, but solely for having lived according to the truth of God. On their way to death they were met by Jacob Dirks' youngest son, Peter Jacobs. In the excess of his sorrow he threw himself on his father's neck, but the executioner treated him most cruelly, and threw him down to be trampled upon by the crowd following them. 1 Pet. i. 7.

It may readily be imagined what a distressing sight this [371] was to the father and the brothers. The father and his two sons being placed at the stake, he said to them: "How is it with you, my dear sons?" They answered: "Dear father, all is well." Andrew Jacobs was at the time a bridegroom; his bride and sister beheld the sacrifice afar off with weeping eyes and breaking hearts. They saw how the bridegroom and brother, forsaking all earthly ties

and affection, had chosen above all for his portion the heavenly bridegroom, Christ Jesus.

On the 17th March, 1568, these pious men were each strangled, then tied to a stake and burnt, testifying to the truth by their blood. For their arduous trial they shall hear the sweet and gentle accents of the Saviour's voice saying to them: "Well done, good and faithful servants, ye have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things; enter ye into the joy of your Lord." Again shall the king say, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.*

Matt. xxv. 23, 34.

This narrative is taken from certain hymns which were composed by witnesses of the martyrdom.

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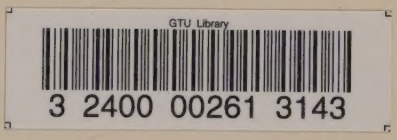
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